# HAVELOCK ELLIS

# Sex in Relation to Society

*STUDIES IN THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SEX, VOL. VI*



*Third printing*



"THIRTY YEARS AGO it was only possible to publish my *Studies* of the problems of sex in an edition restricted to professional readers. The reception accorded to the work by distinguished representatives of medicine in the various countries which it reached was sympathetic, and indeed in the highest degree favourable. . . . Social and legal opinion has during recent years been so far changed that what previously it was only possible to bring before the professional reader may now be presented to all serious readers. Since everything that is written in this book does really concern, and indeed most intimately, all serious persons, I rest content that it is now placed within their reach."

From the author's Preface.

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# SEX IN RELATION TO SOCIETY

Also by Havelock Ellis

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PSYCHOLOGY OF SEX

*HAVELOCK ELLIS*

# SEX IN RELATION TO SOCIETY

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Being the First English Edition of
STUDIES IN THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SEX
Volume VI

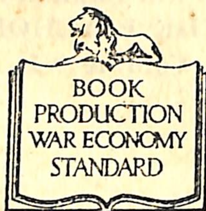


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THIS BOOK IS PRODUCED IN COMPLETE COMFORMITY WITH THE AUTHORISED ECONOMY STANDARDS

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## PREFACE

THE volume here presented in a new edition, abridged and revised throughout, was first published (though only now in England) nearly thirty years ago. It appeared, and still appears, as the sixth and concluding volume of *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. That original edition is not hereby superseded, but the present edition is intended for a wider public.

As to-day I carefully re-examine my work from a later standpoint, I receive two opposed impressions. On the one hand I note how numerous are the small advances which must now be recorded. On the other hand I also realize acutely that, at every main point, what I said before still remains true, and that the conclusions I sought to draw are as urgently as ever in need of emphasis.

To begin at the beginning: there are all sorts of improvements to recognize in the social attitude to the pregnant woman and the infant, an art of puericulture has been constituted, clinics for maternal and infant welfare set up. At the next stage, that of education, an enormous popular literature has been put forth, there are signs of progress in many English and more American schools and colleges, and it is becoming understood that "sex education" does not mean as was once supposed, a warning against vice and disease, but reasonably constitutes an essential part of that wider knowledge of elementary biology which is the right of every boy and girl. Then arises for the young man or woman the difficult problem of sexual activity. It was conventionally held that the choice for the unmarried man (the girl was not supposed to have any choice) lay between prostitution, probably involving a venereal disorder, and a total sex abstinence. We now tend to view this matter as not to be settled solely by abstract considerations; it is increasingly felt that every young person, even of either sex, must possess the knowledge necessary to form a judgment as to his or her own needs and be held responsible for the necessary self-control and self-discipline. The result, noted alike in England and America, is that, among the educated middle class, men tend to be more chaste (in the sense of being less inclined to seek promiscuous sexual intercourse) than formerly, and women to be less chaste (in the sense of being less frequently virginal at marriage). Even those persons who do not regard this result as ideal, admit that it is an approach to a more wholesome and equitable condition of affairs. When, next, we reach marriage, we find that in all civilized countries there has been a more or less gradual approach to the reasonable recognition that, if the marital bond is to be fairly adjusted, its dissolution

must be rendered, under legal conditions to prevent injustice, equally possible with its formation. Those conditions are necessary because marriage is not a mere licence to practise sexual intercourse. It is the portal by which the new generation enters the world, and society cannot be indifferent to the state of that portal. Marriage is more, however, than an institution to ensure, so far as possible, the welfare of the future race ; it is also an arrangement for securing the happiness and well-being of the partners themselves. That is why I dared to follow up the discussion of the evolution of marriage with a chapter on the art of love. At that period the recognition of such an art was regarded as indecent if not immoral, and even the *Lancet*, in a laudatory review of my book which showed general sympathetic approval, disapproved of that chapter. No critic would enter such a protest to-day. It is accepted, even by the most orthodox writers on marriage, that married couples are entitled to seek a life of marital harmony, and that a well-adjusted physical and psychic relationship is essential to such harmony. Finally, there remains the " science of procreation." I might now hesitate to use this term. At that date, genetics, which deals with the inner mysteries of procreation and the essential elements of heredity, scarcely existed even as a name. It is still in its early phases and making progress every day, so that it would be out of place to attempt a statement of its position in the present volume. Yet, even stopping short of genetics in a strict sense, there remains a large amount of information, properly termed scientific, which cannot be passed over, and it has developed so greatly in recent years that this concluding chapter has undergone more revision and addition than any of the others.

When, however, I view this book from another aspect, overlooking the minor changes made necessary by our social progress, I am struck —I will not say surprised and shocked—by the actuality to-day of the demands I had so long ago made for a much greater progress. After all, while slight movement is ever present, sex and society are both alike so deeply traditionalized and institutionalized that they both move with extreme slowness. Knowledge indeed grows ; practice lingers.

Thus at the essential point of the position of the mother, the guardian of the future race, whatever improvements we may note, they seem trivial when we realize that in most countries no adequate provision is legally made to ensure that measure of rest and economic independence at and around the period of pregnancy which skilled observation has shown to be necessary to secure not only her own welfare but that of her offspring, the generation which will rule the world to-morrow. If we go on to the educational preparation of those rulers, never before has there been such insistence on the sexual enlightenment of youth from the earliest age and for the mother's leading place in that first

stage. Yet those most familiar with the facts declare that in this respect mothers are still, on the whole, complete failures. In the minor but significant matter of a reasonable attitude towards nakedness, it is true that numberless nudist societies have been formed, and that those who object to societies for such a purpose have nevertheless tended to change their opinion of private nudity; yet the attitude of law and the police remains fixed to its nineteenth-century phase, while the possibility of stage performances of the "strip tease" order, witnesses to the continued existence among the general public of the old prudish pruriency. If we turn to prostitution and the struggle with the venereal diseases chiefly propagated by prostitution, while it is true that they are now more frankly faced than before and that great progress has been made in diagnosis and in treatment, the social approach remains full of hesitation, and all sorts of difficulties are found in following up the pioneering steps of the Scandinavian countries. Again, in the central field of the marriage institution, while here and there some progress has been made in a rational direction, yet, and especially in England, the most timid reforms are only effected with extreme difficulty in the face of ancient entrenched traditions. Even the control of conception is met with an opposition which to some may well seem criminal. By all whose opinions carry weight, and now even the Roman Catholic clergy (the Catholic laity seem to have always accepted it), it is admitted that some degree of birth control is necessary. It is usually essential to domestic happiness and, in our social state, to economic welfare, while it is also a key to racial betterment if undesirable stocks are slowly to be reduced. Yet even our governments, willing or unwilling slaves to evil superstitions, do little or nothing to make it available to the masses who most need it. In short, all the main conclusions of this book, as originally written, still remain valid.

Yet, as I now present it anew, there is a difference. Thirty years ago it was only possible to publish my *Studies* of the problems of sex in an edition restricted to professional readers. The reception accorded to the work by distinguished representatives of medicine in the various countries which it reached was sympathetic, and indeed in the highest degree favourable. But the physician is above all the healer. It is not his primary business to mould social opinion and still less to seek to modify the laws of his country. Social and legal opinion, nevertheless, has during recent years been so far changed that what previously it was only possible to bring before the professional reader may now be presented to all serious readers. Since everything that is written in this book does really concern, and indeed most intimately, all serious persons, I rest content that it is now placed within their reach.

*August*, 1937. HAVELOCK ELLIS.

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# SEX IN RELATION TO SOCIETY

## CHAPTER I

## THE MOTHER AND HER CHILD

The Child's Right to Choose Its Ancestry—How This is Effected—The Mother the Child's Supreme Parent—Motherhood and the Woman Movement—The Immense Importance of Motherhood—Infant Mortality and Its Causes—The Chief Cause in the Mother—The Need of Rest during Pregnancy—Frequency of Premature Birth—The Function of the State—Recent Advance in Puericulture—The Question of Coitus during Pregnancy—The Need of Rest during Lactation—The Mother's Duty to Suckle Her Child—The Economic Question—The Duty of the State—Recent Progress in the Protection of the Mother—The Fallacy of State Nurseries.

A MAN'S sexual nature, like all else that is most essential in him, is rooted in a soil that was formed long before his birth. In this, as in every other respect, he draws the elements of his life from his ancestors, however new the re-combination may be and however greatly it may be modified by subsequent conditions. A man's destiny stands not in the future but in the past. That, rightly considered, is the most vital of vital facts. Every child thus has a right to choose his own ancestors. Naturally he can only do this vicariously, through his parents. It is the most serious and sacred duty of the future father to choose one half of the ancestral and hereditary character of his future child; it is the most serious and sacred duty of the future mother to make a similar choice. In choosing each other they have between them chosen the whole ancestry of their child. They have determined the stars that will largely rule his fate.

The facts are indeed not so simple as this statement might seem to imply. The processes of heredity are in fact highly complex. The epoch-making experiments of Mendel are still inspiring progress along this line of knowledge. We have here indeed a new science of genetics which is developing every day. In choosing a sexual mate no one knows precisely what contribution will be added to the resulting offspring. At the most he is only now learning to realize the possibilities of his fateful determination.[1]

In the past that determination has usually been made altogether helplessly, ignorantly, even unconsciously. It has either been guided

[1] There are many excellent books on the mechanism of heredity, though the subject is constantly developing. A. E. Watkins' *Heredity and Evolution* is, for example, a sound short work for general readers on the whole subject; so, and also for the general reader, Professor Jennings' *Genetics*, and by the same author, but more technical, *Genetic Variations in Relation to Evolution*.

by an instinct which, on the whole, has worked out fairly well, or controlled by economic interests of the results of which so much cannot be said, or left to the risks of lower than bestial chances which can produce nothing but evil. In the future we cannot but have faith—for the hope of humanity must rest on that faith—that a new guiding impulse, reinforcing natural instinct and becoming in time an inseparable accompaniment of it, will lead civilized man on his racial course. Just as in the past the race has, on the whole, been moulded by a natural, and in part sexual, selection, that was unconscious of itself and ignorant of the ends it made towards, so in the future the race will be moulded by deliberate selection, the creative energy of Nature becoming self-conscious in the civilized brain of man. This is not a faith which has its source in a vague hope. The problems of the individual life are linked on to the fate of the racial life, and again and again we shall find as we ponder the individual questions we are here concerned with, that at all points they ultimately converge towards this same racial end.

Since we have here, therefore, to follow out the sexual relationships of the individual as they bear on society, it will be convenient at this point to put aside the questions of ancestry and to accept the individual as, with hereditary constitution already determined, he lies in his mother's womb.

It is the mother who is the child's supreme parent. At various points in zoological evolution it has seemed possible that the functions that we now know as those of maternity would be largely and even equally shared by the male parent. Nature has tried various experiments in this direction, among the fishes, for instance, and even among birds. But reasonable and excellent as these experiments were, and though they were sufficiently sound to secure their perpetuation unto this day, it remains true that it was not along these lines that Man was destined to emerge. Among all the mammal predecessors of Man, the male is an imposing and important figure in the early days of courtship, but after conception has once been secured the mother plays the chief part in the racial life. The male must be content to forage abroad and stand on guard when at home in the ante-chamber of the family. When she has once been impregnated the female animal angrily rejects the caresses she had welcomed so coquettishly before, and even in Man the place of the father at the birth of his child is not a notably dignified or comfortable one. Nature accords the male but a secondary and comparatively humble place in the home, the breeding-place of the race ; he may compensate himself, if he will, by seeking adventure and renown in the world outside. The mother is the child's supreme parent, and during the period from conception to birth the hygiene of the future man can only be affected by influences which work through her.

Fundamental and elementary as is the fact of the predominant position of the mother in relation to the life of the race, it must be admitted that it has sometimes been forgotten or ignored. In the great ages of humanity it has indeed been accepted as a central and sacred fact. But it has not always been so. At the present time, for instance, we are but emerging from a period during which this fact was often disputed and denied, both in theory and in practice, even by women themselves. This was notably the case both in England and America. Motherhood and the future of the race were systematically belittled. Paternity is but a mere incident, it was argued, in man's life: why should maternity be more than a mere incident in woman's life? By a curiously perverted form of sexual attraction, women were so fascinated by the glamour that surrounded men that they desired to suppress or forget all the facts of organic constitution which made them unlike men, counting their glory as their shame, and sought the same education as men, the same occupations as men, even the same sports. As we know, there was at the origin an element of rightness in this impulse.[1] It was absolutely right in so far as it was a claim for freedom from artificial restriction, and a demand for economic independence. But it became mischievous and absurd when it developed into a passion for doing, in all respects, the same things as men do; how mischievous and how absurd we may realize if we imagine men developing a passion to imitate the ways and avocations of women. Freedom is only good when it is a freedom to follow the laws of one's own nature; it ceases to be freedom when it becomes a slavish attempt to imitate others, and would be disastrous if it could be successful.[2]

At the present day this movement on the theoretical side no longer possesses any representatives who exert serious influence. Yet its practical results are still prominently exhibited in England and the other countries in which it has been felt. Infantile mortality is sometimes enormous, and in England at all events has only in recent years shown a tendency to diminish.

What we need above all, as the most competent authorities agree,

[1] It should scarcely be necessary to add that to assert that motherhood is a woman's supreme function is by no means to assert that her activities should be confined to the home. That is an opinion which may now be regarded as almost extinct even among those who most glorify the function of woman as mother. As Friedrich Naumann and many since have pointed out, a woman is not adequately equipped to fulfil her functions as mother and trainer of children unless she has lived in the world and exercised a vocation.

[2] "Were the capacities of the brain and the heart equal in the sexes," Lily Braun well said, "the entry of women into public life would be of no value to humanity, and would even lead to a still wilder competition. Only the recognition that the entire nature of woman is different from that of man, that it signifies a new vivifying principle in human life, makes the women's movement, in spite of the misconception of its enemies and its friends, a social revolution" (see also Havelock Ellis, *Man and Woman*, eighth edition, especially Ch. XVI.).

is a higher standard of physical motherhood. The problem of infantile mortality, as Newman long since stated in an important and comprehensive work on the subject, is not alone of sanitation, housing, or even poverty as such, but mainly a question of motherhood. This must always be borne in mind when we have to deal with the employment of married women. The superiority in general of Jewish over Christian children, and their lower infantile mortality, seems entirely due to the fact that Jewesses are better mothers. Their environment may be bad, but they are well cared for when pregnant, the offspring are in general breast-fed, and later receive abundance of nourishing and bone-making food.

The healthy woman carrying a healthy fœtus, it may be remarked, does not suffer thereby from undue strain. Paul Bar, a distinguished French investigator, after thorough study, long since came to the conclusion that there is during gestation what he termed a "homogeneous harmonious symbosis." By extensive investigation of the chemical exchanges between mother and fœtus, and chemical analysis of the excretions of pregnant patients, he found that the mother does not lose in strength by her apparent self-sacrifice but gains an increased power of extracting from her food the essential elements needed for the fœtus, and even has a balance over, so that she stands to gain rather than to lose.

The fundamental need of the pregnant woman is rest. Without a large measure of maternal rest there can be no puericulture.[1] The task of creating a man needs the whole of a woman's best energies, more especially during the three months before birth. It cannot be subordinated to the tax on strength involved by manual or mental labour, or even strenuous social duties and amusements. The numerous experiments and observations which have been made in maternity hospitals, more especially in France, have shown conclusively that not only the present and future well-being of the mother and the ease of her confinement, but the fate of the child, are immensely influenced by rest during the last months of pregnancy. "Every working woman is entitled to rest during the last three months of her pregnancy." This formula was adopted long since by the International Congress of Hygiene in 1900, but it cannot be practically carried out except by the co-operation of the whole community. It is not enough to say that a woman ought to rest during pregnancy; it is the business of the community to ensure

[1] The word "puericulture" was invented by Dr. Caron in 1866 to signify the culture of children after birth. It was Pinard, the distinguished French obstetrician, who, in 1895, gave it a larger and truer significance by applying it to include the culture of children before birth. It is now defined by Péchin as "the science which has for its end the search for the knowledge relative to the reproduction, the preservation, and the amelioration of the human race." The Ecole de Puériculture was established in Paris in 1920.

that that rest is duly secured. The woman herself, and her employer, we may be certain, will do their best to cheat the community, but it is the community which suffers, both economically and morally, when a woman casts her inferior children into the world, and in its own interests the community is forced to control both employer and employed. We can no longer allow it to be said, in Bouchacourt's words, that "to-day the dregs of the human species—the blind, the deaf-mute, the degenerate, the nervous, the vicious, the idiotic, the imbecile, the cretins and epileptics—are better protected than pregnant women."

Pinard, who must always be honoured as one of the founders of eugenics, together with his pupils, prepared for the acceptance of this simple but important principle by making clear the grounds on which it is based. From prolonged observations on the pregnant women of all classes Pinard showed conclusively that women who rest during pregnancy have finer children than women who do not rest. Apart from the more general evils of work during pregnancy, Pinard found that during the later months it had a tendency to press the uterus down into the pelvis, and so cause the premature birth of undeveloped children, while labour was rendered more difficult and dangerous.

Letourneux and others studied the question whether repose during pregnancy is necessary for women whose professional work is only slightly fatiguing (dressmakers, milliners, etc.) and also when resting during pregnancy. There was a slight but significant difference in favour of the women with less fatiguing work, even though less robust. The difference between repose and non-repose is considerable, while it also enables robust women exercising a fatiguing occupation to catch up, though not to surpass, the frailer women exercising a less fatiguing occupation. Even in the comparatively unfatiguing occupations of milliners, etc., rest during pregnancy still remains important, and cannot safely be dispensed with.

In every group investigated the difference in the average weight of the child was markedly in favour of the women who rested, and it was notable that the greatest difference was found in the case of the farm girls who were probably the most robust but also the hardest worked.

The usual time of gestation ranges between 274 and 280 days (or 280 to 290 days from the last menstrual period), and occasionally a few days longer, though there is dispute as to the length of the extreme limit, which some authorities would extend to 300 days (accepted by the Napoleonic code) or even to 320 or more days. Müller suggested in 1898, in a Thèse de Nancy, that civilization tends to shorten the period of gestation, and that in earlier ages it was longer than it is now. Such a tendency to premature birth under the exciting nervous influences of civilization is not accepted as a rule, but would thus correspond, as Bouchacourt pointed out, to the similar effect of

domestication in animals. The robust country-woman becomes transformed into the more graceful, but also more fragile, town-woman who needs a degree of care and hygiene which the country-woman with her more resistant nervous system can to some extent dispense with, although even she, as we see, suffers in the person of her child, and probably in her own person, from the effect of work during pregnancy. The serious nature of this civilized tendency to premature birth—of which lack of rest in pregnancy is, however, only one of several important causes—is shown by the fact that Séropian some years ago found that about one-third of French births are to a greater or less extent premature. Pregnancy is not a morbid condition; on the contrary, a pregnant woman is at the climax of her most normal physiological life, but owing to the tension thus involved she is specially liable to suffer from any slight shock or strain. It must be added that the increased tendency to premature birth, while in part it may be due to general tendencies of civilization, is also in part due to definite and preventable causes, such as syphilis, alcoholism, and attempts to produce abortion.

Premature birth ought to be avoided, because the child born too early is insufficiently equipped for the task before him. Astengo, dealing with nearly 19,000 cases at the Lariboisière Hospital in Paris and the Maternité, found that, reckoning from the date of the last menstruation, there is a direct relation between the weight of the infant at birth and the length of the pregnancy. The longer the pregnancy the finer the child.

It need scarcely be pointed out that not only is immaturity a cause of deterioration in the infants that survive, but that it alone serves enormously to decrease the number of infants that are able to survive. Thus G. Newman states that in most large English urban districts immaturity is the chief cause of infant mortality. It is estimated that about half of the mothers of infants dying of immaturity suffer from marked ill-health and poor physique; they are not, therefore, fitted to be mothers.

Rest during pregnancy is a very powerful agent in preventing premature birth. Thus Dr. Sarraute-Lourié compared 1,550 pregnant women at the Asile Michelet who rested before confinement with 1,550 women confined at the Hôpital Lariboisière who had enjoyed no such period of rest. She found that the average duration of pregnancy was at least twenty days shorter in the latter group. Peller, ot Vienna, in his instructive work *Der Geburtstod*, showed in 1936 that the unmarried women admitted to an old established Viennese charitable institution some weeks before the termination of pregnancy displayed a much lower still-birth and neonatal mortality than in the children, legitimate or illegitimate, of mothers who had not been freed from household or industrial work.

Leyboff has insisted on the absolute necessity of rest during pregnancy, as well for the sake of the woman herself as the burden she carries, and shows the evil results which follow when rest is neglected. Railway travelling, horse-riding, bicycling, and sea-voyages are also, Leyboff believes, liable to be injurious to the course of pregnancy. Long since, Leyboff, recognizing the difficulties which procreating women are placed under by present industrial conditions, concluded that "it is urgently necessary to prevent women, by law, from working during the last three months of pregnancy; that in every district there should be a maternity fund; that during this enforced rest a woman should receive the same salary as during work." At least two months' rest before confinement, as Perruc and others have insisted, should be made compulsory; during this period the woman to receive an indemnity regulated by the State. It might take the form of compulsory assurance, to which the worker, the employer, and the State alike contribute.

It is probable that during the earlier months of pregnancy, work, if not excessively heavy and exhausting, has little or no bad effect; thus Bacchimont found that, while there was a great gain in the weight of children of mothers who had rested for three months, there was no corresponding gain in the children of those mothers who had rested for longer periods. It is during the last three months that freedom, repose, the cessation of the obligatory routine of employment, even in the household, become necessary. Many, however, fearing that economic and industrial conditions render so long a period of rest too difficult of practical attainment, are content to demand two months as a minimum. Ballantyne, as well as Niven, asked only for one month's compulsory rest during pregnancy, with indemnity. Arthur Helme, however, taking a more comprehensive view of all the factors involved, concluded that the important thing would be to prohibit pregnant women from going to work at all, and that it is important from the standpoint of the child that this prohibition should include the early as well as the late months of pregnancy.

In England until recent years little progress has been made as regards this question of rest during pregnancy, even as regards the education of public opinion. In England there are also few institutions which receive unmarried women after their first pregnancy, for, as Bouchacourt remarked, ancient British prejudices are opposed to any mercy being shown to women who are recidivists in committing the crime of conception. In 1919, however, the National Council for Maternity and Child Welfare was founded, with the object of co-ordinating and assisting in the work of the various national and local organizations of motherhood, infancy, and childhood; it has been widely influential in various directions.

It was in France that the urgent need of rest during the latter

months of pregnancy was first clearly realized, and any serious and official attempts made to provide for it. In addition to maternity refuges, there were institutions in France for assisting pregnant women with help and advice long before such clinics were set up in England.

There ought to be no manner of doubt that when, as is the case to-day in our own and some other supposedly civilized countries, motherhood outside marriage is accounted as almost a crime, and abortion even actually a crime, there is a great need for adequate provision for unmarried women who are about to become mothers, enabling them to receive shelter and care in secrecy, and to preserve their self-respect and social position. This is necessary not only in the interests of humanity and public economy, but also, as is too often forgotten, in the interests of morality, for it is certain that by the neglect to furnish adequate provision of this nature women are driven to infanticide and prostitution. In earlier, more humane days, the general provision for the secret reception and care of illegitimate infants was undoubtedly beneficial. The suppression of the medieval method, which in France took place gradually between 1833 and 1862, led to a great increase in infanticide and abortion, and was a direct encouragement to crime and immorality. In 1887 the Conseil Général of the Seine sought to replace the prevailing neglect of this matter by the adoption of more enlightened ideas and founded a *bureau secret d'admission* for pregnant women. Since then both the abandonment of infants and infanticide have greatly diminished. It is widely held that the State should unify the arrangements for assuring secret maternity, and should, in its own interests, undertake the expense. In 1904 French law ensured the protection of unmarried mothers by guaranteeing their secret, but it failed to organize the general establishment of secret maternities, and has left to doctors the pioneering part in this humane public work. It is not among the least benefits of the falling birth rate that it has helped to stimulate this movement. It was in 1913 that the first French law, inadequate but still useful, was passed for the protection and assistance of women of the wage-earning class, whether married or single, during pregnancy and for four weeks following delivery.

The development of an industrial system which subordinates the human body and the human soul to the thirst for gold has, for a time, dismissed from social consideration the interests of the race and even of the individual, but it must be remembered that this has not been always and everywhere so. Although in some parts of the world the women of savage peoples work up to the time of confinement, it must be remarked that the conditions of work in savage life do not resemble the strenuous and continuous labour of modern factories or even modern houses. In many parts of the world, however, women are not allowed

to work hard during pregnancy and every consideration is shown to them. This is so, for instance, among the Pueblo Indians, and among the Indians of Mexico. Similar care is taken in the Carolines and the Gilbert Islands and in many other regions all over the world. In some places, women are secluded during pregnancy, and in others are compelled to observe many more or less excellent rules. It is true that the assigned cause for these rules is frequently the fear of evil spirits, but they nevertheless often preserve a hygienic value. In many parts of the world the discovery of pregnancy is the sign for a festival of more or less ritual character, and much good advice is given to the expectant mother. The modern Musselmans are careful to guard the health of their women when pregnant, and so also the Chinese.

As a detailed example I may quote the account I have received from a correspondent in India of the practice of a Hindu community in Southern India:

" The customs of this community relating to pregnancy testify to their high conception of sexual hygiene and puericulture. The girl, who resides with her husband after puberty, and her mother-in-law keep a strict note of the date of menstruation. If the menses do not make their appearance in time but are delayed, a hint of it is conveyed to the girl's parents who come at once to see the girl. When in course of time morning sickness and other symptoms of pregnancy begin to appear at the end of the second month, the girl is formally invited to her parents' house. Even though the two families may not be on good terms, custom imposes upon her parents the duty of inviting her, and upon her parents-in-law the duty of compliance with it; the claims of the pregnant girl are placed high over petty family squabbles.

" The girl stays with her mother till the middle of the fifth month. The advantages of such a stay are obvious. It secures her complete rest from the fatiguing occupations of the household, which she cannot have in her husband's house where she is both mistress and maid, at a time when new calls are made upon her system. Moreover, to no one else can the girl be expected to confide than the mother all the numerous little troubles that assail a woman in this stage of pregnancy. The freer atmosphere of the parental roof is itself an advantage. Incidentally, this stay with the parents reduces the opportunities for intercourse; for the husband visits her in his father-in-law's house only occasionally.

" In the middle of the fifth month, when the fact of pregnancy is established beyond all reasonable doubt, she is sent to her husband's house. In the sixth month, when the differentiation of sex takes place in the uterus, is performed a ceremony which shows the Hindu's belief in antenatal influences on the determination of sex. The object of the ceremony is to ' make the fœtus male.' On the night of the ceremony

coitus is regarded as compulsory. The object is not clear; it may be that this marks the end of the period when coitus may be had normally and with pleasure. For, either the next day or any other convenient day within the fortnight, the girl leaves her husband for her parents' house, and does not return till after confinement.

"After the birth of the child, the mother is confined to bed for ten days, except for a daily bath all over the body. The baby is put to the breast from the third or fourth day. For the first twenty or thirty days she is not allowed to touch any person or thing, a useful protection against the temptation of helping in the domestic work or the greater temptation of coitus if the husband happens to be present on a visit to see the new-born. It is not till after the mother has picked up her strength in the fifth or seventh month after confinement that she is sent back to her husband's house.

"Reference may be made to the positive injunctions and taboos which a girl has to observe during pregnancy and which illustrate the Hindu's appreciation of antenatal influences on the child. Among the former are the customs of making the expectant mother feed and tend as many babies as she can with her own hands, taking her on pilgrimage to sacred shrines, and reading to her the stories of the childhood of Sri Krishna. Among the latter are the rules which forbid a visit of condolence, the sight of a corpse or of a woman who has recently lost her child. She is also protected against shocks both physical and mental. She is not allowed to see any 'freak of nature,' anyone with a redundant or deficient limb, or anyone who is afflicted with disease or infirm."

Even in Europe, in the thirteenth century, as Clappier notes, industrial corporations sometimes had regard to this matter, and would not allow women to work during pregnancy. In Iceland, where much of the primitive life of Scandinavian Europe is still preserved, great precautions are taken with pregnant women. They must lead a quiet life, avoid tight garments, be moderate in eating and drinking, take no alcohol, be safeguarded from all shocks, while their husbands and all others who surround them must treat them with consideration, save them from worry and always bear with them patiently.[1]

It is necessary to emphasize this point because we have to realize that the modern movement for surrounding the pregnant woman with tenderness and care, so far from being the mere outcome of civilized softness and degeneracy, is, in all probability, the return on a higher plane to the sane practice of those races which laid the foundations of human greatness.

While rest is the cardinal virtue imposed on a woman during the later months of pregnancy, there are other points in her regimen

[1] A summary of the customs of various peoples in regard to pregnancy is given by Ploss and Bartels in their great work on *Woman*. (Now translated, William Heinemann (Medical Books) Ltd.)

that are far from unimportant in their bearing on the fate of the child. One of these is the question of the mother's use of alcohol. Undoubtedly alcohol has been a cause of much fanaticism. But the declamatory extravagance of anti-alcoholists must not blind us to the fact that the evils of alcohol are real. On the reproductive process, especially on the mammary glands, and on the child, alcohol has an arresting and degenerative influence without any compensatory advantages. Branthwaite showed many years ago that sterility in inebriate women is more than double the normal average and the infantile mortality of the offspring extremely high.[1] The woman who is bearing her child in her womb or suckling it at her breast would do well to remember that the alcohol which may be harmless to herself is little better than poison to the immature being who derives nourishment from her blood. She should confine herself to the very lightest of alcoholic beverages in very moderate amounts and would do better still to abandon these entirely and drink milk instead. She is now the sole source of the child's life and she cannot be too scrupulous in creating around it an atmosphere of purity and health. No after-influence can ever compensate for mistakes made at this time.

What is true of alcohol is equally true of other potent drugs and poisons, which should all be avoided so far as possible during pregnancy because of the harmful influence they may directly exert on the embryo. Hygiene is better than drugs, and care should be exercised in diet, which should by no means be excessive. It is a mistake to suppose that the pregnant woman needs considerably more food than usual, and there is much reason to believe not only that a rich meat diet tends to cause sterility but that it is also unfavourable to the development of the child in the womb. Nutrition should, of course, be adequate. Noel Paton has shown that defective nutrition of the pregnant woman diminishes the weight of the offspring.

How far, if at all, it is often asked, should sexual intercourse be continued after fecundation has been clearly ascertained? This has not always been found an easy question to answer, for in the human couple many considerations combine to complicate the answer. Even the Catholic theologians have not been entirely in agreement on this point. Clement of Alexandria said that when the seed had been sown the field must be left till harvest. But it may be concluded that, as a rule, the Church was inclined to regard intercourse during pregnancy as at most a venial sin, provided there was no danger of abortion. Augustine, Gregory the Great, Aquinas, Dens, for instance,

[1] W. C. Sullivan (*Alcoholism*, 1906, Ch. XI) summarized the evidence showing that alcohol is a factor of human degeneration.

seem to be of this mind ; for a few, indeed, it is no sin at all.[1] Among animals the rule is simple and uniform ; as soon as the female is impregnated she absolutely rejects all advance of the male until, after birth and lactation are over, another period of œstrus occurs. Among savages the tendency is less uniform, and sexual abstinence, when it occurs during pregnancy, tends to become less a natural instinct than a ritual observance, or a custom now chiefly supported by superstitions. Among many primitive peoples abstinence during the whole of pregnancy is enjoined because it is believed that the semen would kill the fœtus. The Talmud is unfavourable to coitus during the early months of pregnancy, and the Koran prohibits it during the whole of the period, as well as during suckling. Among the Hindus, on the other hand, intercourse is continued up to the last fortnight of pregnancy, and it is even believed that the injected semen helps to nourish the embryo. The great Indian physician Susruta, however, was opposed to coitus during pregnancy, and the Chinese are emphatically on the same side.

As men have emerged from barbarism in the direction of civilization, the animal instinct of refusal after impregnation has been completely lost in women, while at the same time both sexes tend to become indifferent to those ritual restraints which at an earlier period were almost as binding as instinct. Sexual intercourse thus came to be practised after impregnation, much the same as before, as part of ordinary "marital rights," though sometimes there has remained a faint suspicion, reflected in the hesitating attitude of the Catholic Church already alluded to, that such intercourse may be a sinful indulgence. Morality is, however, called in to fortify this indulgence. If the husband is shut out from marital intercourse at this time, it is argued, he will seek extra-marital intercourse, as indeed in some parts of the world it is recognized that he legitimately may ; therefore the interests of the wife, anxious to retain her husband's fidelity, and the interests of Christian morality, anxious to uphold the institution of monogamy, combine to permit the continuation of coitus during pregnancy. The custom has been furthered by the fact that, in civilized women at all events, coitus during pregnancy is usually not less agreeable than at other times and by some women is felt indeed to be even more agreeable.[2] There is also the further consideration, for those couples who have sought to prevent conception, that now intercourse may be enjoyed with impunity. From a higher point of view such intercourse may also be justified, for if,

[1] Debreyne, *Mœchialogie*, p. 277. And from the Protestant side see Northcote (*Christianity and Sex Problems*, Ch. IX), who would permit sexual intercourse during pregnancy.

[2] Thus one writes : "I have only had one child, but I may say that during pregnancy the desire for union was much stronger, for the whole time, than at any other period."

as all the finer moralists of the sexual impulse now believe, love has its value not only in so far as it induces procreation but also in so far as it aids individual development and the mutual good and harmony of the united couple, it becomes morally right during pregnancy.

From an early period, however, great authorities have declared themselves in opposition to the custom of practising coitus during pregnancy. At the end of the first century, Soranus, the first of great gynæcologists, stated, in his treatise on the diseases of women, that sexual intercourse is injurious throughout pregnancy, because of the movement imparted to the uterus, and especially injurious during the latter months. For more than sixteen hundred years the question, having fallen into the hands of the theologians, seems to have been neglected on the medical side until in 1721 a distinguished French obstetrician, Mauriceau, stated that no pregnant woman should have intercourse during the last two months and that no woman subject to miscarriage should have intercourse at all during pregnancy. For more than a century, however, Mauriceau remained a pioneer with few or no followers. It would be inconvenient, the opinion went, even if it were necessary, to forbid intercourse during pregnancy.[1]

During recent years, nevertheless, there has been an increasingly strong tendency among obstetricians to speak decisively concerning intercourse during pregnancy, either by condemning it altogether or by enjoining great prudence. It is probable that, in accordance with the experiments on chicken embryos, shocks and disturbances to the human embryo may also produce injurious effects on growth. The disturbance due to coitus in the early stages of pregnancy may thus tend to produce malformation. When such conditions are found in the children of perfectly healthy, vigorous, and generally temperate parents who have indulged recklessly in coitus during the early stages of pregnancy it is possible that such coitus has acted on the embryo in the same way as shocks and intoxications on the embryo of lower organisms. However this may be, it is certain that in predisposed women, coitus during pregnancy causes premature birth ; it sometimes happens that labour pains begin a few minutes after the act. The natural instinct of animals refuses to allow intercourse during pregnancy ; the ritual observance of primitive peoples frequently points in the same direction ; the voice of medical science, so far as it speaks at all, now utters the same warning.

[1] This "inconvenience" remains to-day a stumbling block with many excellent authorities. "Except when there is a tendency to miscarriage," says Kossmann, "we must be very guarded in ordering abstinence from intercourse during pregnancy," and Ballantyne cautiously remarked that the question is difficult to decide. Forel also, who was not prepared to advocate complete sexual abstinence during a normal pregnancy, admitted that it is a rather difficult question.

Nearly everything that has been said of the hygiene of pregnancy, and the need for rest, applies also to the period immediately following the birth of the child. Rest and hygiene on the mother's part continue to be necessary alike in her own interests and in the child's. This need has indeed been more generally and more practically recognized than the need for rest during pregnancy. The laws of several countries make compulsory a period of rest from employment after confinement, and in some countries they seek to provide for the remuneration of the mother during this enforced rest. In no country indeed, not even the U.S.S.R., is the principle carried out so thoroughly and for so long a period as is desirable. But it is the right principle, and embodies the germ which, in the future, will be developed. There can be little doubt that whatever are the matters, and they are certainly many, which may be safely left to the discretion of the individual, the care of the mother and her child is not among them. That is a matter which, more than any other, concerns the community as a whole, and the community cannot afford to be slack in asserting its authority over it. The State needs healthy men and women, and by any negligence in attending to this need it inflicts serious charges of all sorts upon itself, and at the same time dangerously impairs its efficiency in the world. Nations have begun to recognize the desirability of education, but they have scarcely yet begun to realize that the nationalization of health is even more important than the nationalization of education. If it were necessary to choose between the task of getting children educated and the task of getting them well-born and healthy it would be better to abandon education. There have been many great peoples who never dreamed of national systems of education; there has been no great people without the art of producing healthy and vigorous children.

This matter becomes of peculiar importance in great industrial States because in such States a tacit conspiracy tends to grow up to subordinate national ends to individual ends, and practically to work for the deterioration of the race. In England, for instance, this tendency has been peculiarly well marked and with disastrous results. The interest of the employed woman tends to become one with that of her employer; between them they combine to crush the interests of the child who represents the race, and to defeat the laws made in the interests of the race which are those of the community as a whole. The employed woman wishes to earn as much wages as she can and with as little interruption as she can; in gratifying that wish she is, at the same time, acting in the interests of the employer, who carefully avoids thwarting her.

This impulse on the employed woman's part is by no means always and entirely the result of poverty, and would not, therefore, be

removed by raising her wages. Long before marriage, when little more than a child, she has usually gone out to work, and work has become a second nature. She has mastered her work, she enjoys a certain position and what to her are high wages ; she is among her friends and companions ; the noise and bustle and excitement of the work-room or the factory have become an agreeable stimulant which she can no longer do without. On the other hand, her home means nothing to her ; she only returns there to sleep, leaving it next morning at day-break or earlier ; she is ignorant even of the simplest domestic arts ; she moves about in her own home like a strange and awkward child. The mere act of marriage cannot change this state of things ; however willing she may be at marriage to become a domesticated wife, she is destitute alike of the inclination or the skill for domesticity. Even in spite of herself she is driven back to the work-shop, to the one place where she feels really at home.

In England it was long since made illegal to employ a woman "knowingly" in a workshop within four weeks of the birth of her child, but no provision is made by the law for the compensation of the woman. She evaded the law in tacit collusion with her employers, who can always avoid "knowing" that a birth has taken place, and so escape all responsibility for the mother's employment. Thus the factory inspectors were unable to take action, and the law became a dead letter. By the insertion of this "knowingly" a premium was placed on ignorance. The unwisdom of thus beforehand placing a premium on ignorance has always been more or less clearly recognized by the framers of legal codes even as far back as the days of the Ten Commandments and the laws of Hamurabi. It is the business of the Court, of those who administer the law, to make allowance for ignorance where such allowance is fairly called for ; it is not for the law-maker to make smooth the path of the law-breaker. There are always law-makers so scrupulous, or so simple-minded, that they would be prepared to exact that no pick-pocket should be prosecuted if he was able to declare on oath that he had no "knowledge" that the purse he had taken belonged to the person he extracted it from.

The French industrialists were in this matter pioneers. Thus at the great French gun and armour-plate works at Creuzot (Saône et Loire) the salaries of expectant mothers among the employees were raised and arrangements made for giving them proper advice and medical attendance ; they are not allowed to work after the middle of pregnancy or to return to work after confinement without a medical certificate of fitness. The results are said to be excellent, not only on the health of the mothers, but in the diminution of premature births, the decrease of infantile deaths, and the general prevalance of breast-feeding. It is a mistake to suppose, I may remark, that the French birth-rate is low. Even some ten years ago it was the same as the

English rate; it is the French infantile death-rate which has been so high, as compared for instance with the English. Moreover the English survival rate for infants is constantly improving. Thus in 1935 only 57 died before their first birthday in each 1,000 born, though in the first decade of the century it was 128 to the 1,000. But much remains to be done; in 1935 children between eighteen months and two years were found in 16 per cent. cases to need treatment for some defect or disease.

No doubt modern civilized communities now begin to realize that under the new conditions they must in their own interests ensure that the mother's best energy and vitality are devoted to the child, both before and after its birth. They are also realizing that they cannot carry out their duty in this respect unless they make adequate provision for the mothers thus compelled to renounce employment in order to devote themselves to their children. We reach a point at which Individualism is at one with Socialism. The individualist cannot fail to see that it is at all cost necessary to remove social conditions which crush out all individuality; the socialist cannot fail to see that a society which neglects to introduce order at this central and vital point, the production of the individual, must speedily perish.

It is involved in the proper fulfilment of a mother's relationship to her infant child that, provided she is healthy, she should suckle it. Of recent years this question has become a matter of serious gravity. In the middle of the eighteenth century, when the upper-class women of France had grown disinclined to suckle their own children, Rousseau raised so loud and eloquent a protest that it became once more the fashion for a woman to fulfil her natural duties. At the present time, when the same evil is found once more, and in a far more serious form, since now it is not the small upper-class but the great lower-class that is concerned, the eloquence of a Rousseau would be powerless, for it is not fashion so much as convenience, and especially an intractable economic factor, that is chiefly concerned. Not the least urgent reason for putting women, and especially mothers, upon a sounder economic basis, is the necessity of enabling them to suckle their children.

No woman is sound, healthy, and complete unless she possesses breasts that are beautiful enough to hold the promise of being functional when the time for their exercise arrives, and nipples that can give suck. The gravity of this question to-day is shown by the frequency with which women are lacking in this essential element of womanhood, and the young man of to-day, it has been said, often in taking a wife, " actually marries but part of a woman, the other part being exhibited in the chemist's shop window, in the shape of a glass feeding-bottle."

As Forsyth has shown, there has been a steady decline in the period of suckling during recent centuries. Under the Stuarts it was eighteen

months to two years ; in Georgian days one year, and later only eight months. The chief reason now given for not suckling is absence of milk ; other reasons being inability or disinclination to suckle, and refusal of the child to take the breast. There are many statistics, English, French, and German, showing the frequent inability or disinclination of working women to suckle.

The reasons why children should be suckled at their mother's breasts are larger than some may be inclined to believe. In the first place the psychological reason is one of no mean importance. The breast with its exquisitely sensitive nipple, vibrating in harmony with the sexual organs, furnishes the normal mechanism by which maternal love is developed. No doubt the woman who never suckles her child may love it, but such love is liable to remain defective on the fundamental and instinctive side. In some women, indeed, whom we may hesitate to call abnormal, maternal love fails to awaken at all until brought into action through this mechanism by the act of suckling.

A more generally recognized and certainly fundamental reason for suckling the child is that the milk of the mother, provided she is reasonably healthy, is the infant's only ideally fit food. There are some people whose confidence in science leads them to believe that it is possible to manufacture foods that are as good or better than mother's milk ; that is only true when the mother's condition is bad. The infant's best food is that elaborated in the healthy mother's body. It is impossible to emphasize this fact too strongly. All other foods are more or less possible substitutes, which require trouble to prepare properly and are, moreover, exposed to various risks from which the mother's milk is free. Since the investigation of Dr. Janet Lane-Claypon in 1912 it is generally recognized that for the young of all species breast-feeding, especially during the first weeks of life, is of the highest importance.

A further reason, especially among the poor, against the use of any artificial foods is that it accustoms those around the child to try experiments with its feeding and to fancy that any kind of food they eat themselves may be good for the infant. It thus happens that bread and potatoes, brandy and gin, are thrust into infants' mouths. With the infant that is given the breast it is easier to make plain that, except by the doctor's orders, nothing else must be given.

An additional reason why the mother should suckle her child is the close and frequent association with the child thus involved. Not only is the child better cared for in all respects, but the mother is not deprived of the discipline of such care, and is also enabled from the outset to learn and to understand the child's nature.

The inability to suckle acquires great significance if we realize that it is associated, probably in a large measure as a direct cause, with infantile mortality. The mortality of artificially-fed infants during

the first year of life has been found to be seldom less than double that of the breast-fed. Those who survive at the end of the first year have been found to weigh about 25 per cent. less than the breast-fed, and to be much shorter. The degenerate character of the artificially-fed is well indicated by the fact that at one time of 40,000 children brought for treatment to the Children's Hospital in Munich, 86 per cent. had been brought up by hand. The evil influence persists even up to adult life. In some parts of France where nearly all children are brought up by hand, it has been found that the percentage of rejected conscripts is nearly double that for France generally.

The advantages for an infant of being suckled by its mother are greater than can be accounted for by the mere fact of being suckled rather than hand-fed. This was shown by Vitrey, who found, from the statistics of the Hôtel-Dieu at Lyons, that infants suckled by their mothers had a mortality of only 12 per cent., but if suckled by strangers the mortality rose to 33 per cent. It may be added that, while suckling is essential to the complete well-being of the child, it is highly desirable for the sake of the mother's health. Even at the outset it assists the involution of the uterus.

As things are to-day in modern industrial countries, the righting of these wrongs cannot be left to Nature, that is, to the ignorant and untrained impulses of persons who live in a whirl of artificial life where the voice of instinct is drowned. The mother, we are accustomed to think, may be trusted to see to the welfare of her child, and it is unnecessary, or even "immoral," to come to her assistance. Yet there are few things, I think, more pathetic than the sight of a young Lancashire mother who works in the mills, when she has to stay at home to nurse her sick child. She is used to rise before day-break to go to the mill; she has scarcely seen her child by the light of the sun, she knows nothing of its necessities, the hands that are so skilful to catch the loom cannot soothe the child. The mother gazes down at it in vague, awkward, speechless misery. It is not a sight one can ever forget.

France took the lead in the initiation of the scientific and practical movements of puericulture, and in France were formed the germs of nearly all the methods now becoming adopted for arresting infantile mortality. The village system of Villiers-le-Duc, near Dijon in the Côte d'Or, proved a germ of this fruitful kind. Here every pregnant woman not able to secure the right conditions for her own life and that of the child she is bearing, became able to claim the assistance of the village authorities; she was entitled, without payment, to the attendance of a doctor and midwife and to one franc a day during her confinement. The measures adopted in this village practically abolished both maternal and infantile mortality. Dr. Samson Moore, the medical officer of health for Huddersfield, heard of this village, and

Mr. Benjamin Broadbent, the Mayor of Huddersfield, visited Villiers-le-Duc. It was resolved to initiate in Huddersfield a movement for combating infant mortality. Henceforth arose what became known as the Huddersfield scheme, a scheme which has been fruitful in splendid results. The points of the Huddersfield scheme were: (1) compulsory notification of births within forty-eight hours; (2) the appointment of lady assistant medical officers of help to visit the home, inquire, advise, and assist; (3) the organized aid of voluntary lady workers in subordination to the municipal part of the scheme; (4) appeal to the medical officer for help when the baby, not being under medical care, fails to thrive. The infantile mortality of Huddersfield was greatly reduced by this scheme, and it may be said to be the origin of the English Notification of Births Act, which came into operation in 1908. This Act represented, in England, the national inauguration of a scheme for the betterment of the race, the ultimate results of which it is impossible to foresee. In 1915 the Act was extended to aid women in pregnancy.

Schools for mothers, which may be said to have their origin in the *Consultations de Nourrissons*, established in France by Professor Budin in 1892, reached England in 1908, the first being established in London by Dr. F. J. Sykes. Since then municipal and other clinics to assist mothers and their infants have become general.

It will be seen that the movements now being set in action, for the improvement of the race through the child and the child's mother, recognize the intimacy of the relation between the mother and her child and are designed to aid her, even if necessary by the exercise of some pressure, in performing her natural functions in relation to her child. To the theoretical philanthropist, eager to reform the world on paper, nothing seems simpler than to cure the present evils of child-rearing by setting up State nurseries which are at once to relieve mothers of everything connected with the production of the men of the future beyond the pleasure—if such it happens to be—of conceiving them and the trouble of bearing them, and at the same time to rear them up independently of the home, in a wholesome, economical, and scientific manner. Nothing seems simpler, but from the fundamental psychological standpoint nothing is falser. The idea of a State which is outside the community is but a survival in another form of that antiquated notion which compelled Louis XIV to declare "L'Etat c'est moi!" A State which admits that the individuals composing it are incompetent to perform their own most sacred and intimate functions, and takes upon itself to perform them instead, attempts a task which would be undesirable, even if it were possible of achievement. It must always be remembered that a State which proposes to relieve its constituent members of their natural functions and responsibilities attempts something quite

different from the State which seeks to aid its members to fulfil their own biological and social functions more adequately. A State which enables its mothers to rest when they are child-bearing is engaged in a reasonable task; a State which takes over its mothers' children is reducing philanthropy to absurdity. It is easy to realize this if we consider the inevitable course of circumstances under a system of "State-nurseries." The child would be removed from its natural mother at the earliest age, but some one has to perform the mother's duties; the substitute must therefore be properly trained for such duties; and in exercising them under favourable circumstances a maternal relationship is developed between the child and the "mother," who doubtless possesses natural maternal instincts but has no natural maternal bond to the child she is mothering. Such a relationship tends to become on both sides practically and emotionally the real relationship. We often have opportunity to see how unsatisfactory such a relationship becomes. The artificial mother is deprived of a child she had begun to feel her own; the child's emotional relationships are upset, split and distorted; the real mother has the bitterness of feeling that for her child she is not the real mother. Would it not have been much better for all if the State had encouraged the vast army of women it had trained for the position of mothering other women's children, to have, instead, children of their own?

## CHAPTER II

## SEXUAL EDUCATION

Nurture as Necessary as Breed—Precocious Manifestations of the Sexual Impulse—Are They to be Regarded as Normal?—The Sexual Play of Children —The Emotion of Love in Childhood—Are Town Children More Precocious Sexually than Country Children?—Children's Ideas concerning the Origin of Babies—Need for Beginning the Sexual Education of Children in Early Years—Early Training in Responsibility—Evil of the Old Doctrine of Silence in Matters of Sex—The Evil Magnified When Applied to Girls—The Morbid Influence of Artificial Mystery—Books on Sexual Enlightenment—Nature of the Mother's Task—Sexual Education in the School—The Value of Biology—Sexual Education after Puberty—Preparation for the Onset of Menstruation—The Right Attitude Towards Woman's Sexual Life—Necessity of the Hygiene of Menstruation during Adolescence—Such Hygiene Compatible with the Educational and Social Equality of the Sexes—The Invalidism of Women Mainly Due to Hygienic Neglect—Influence of Physical Training on Women—The Evils of Emotional Suppression—Influence of These Factors of a Woman's Fate in Marriage—The Doctor's Part in Sexual Education—Pubertal Initiation into the Ideal World—The Place of the Religious and Ethical Teacher—The Initiation Rites of Savages into Manhood and Womanhood—The Sexual Influence of Literature—The Sexual Influence of Art.

It may seem to some that in attaching weight to the ancestry, the parentage, the conception, the gestation, even the first infancy, of the child we are wandering away from the sphere of the psychology of sex. That is far from being the case. We are, on the contrary, going to the root of sex. All our growing knowledge tends to show that, equally with his physical nature, the child's psychic nature is based on breed and nurture, on the quality of the stocks he belongs to, and on the care taken at the early moments, when care counts for most, to preserve the quality of those stocks when fine, and to improve the quality of the individual when of defective stock.

Both breed and nurture are influential on the fate of the individual. The influence of nurture is so obvious that few are likely to underrate it. The influence of breed, however, is less obvious, and we may still meet with persons, often prepossessed by one-sided theories, who deny it altogether. The growth of our knowledge in this matter shows how subtle and penetrative is the influence of heredity. No sound civilization is possible except in a community which in the mass is not only well-nurtured but well-bred. And in no part of life so much as in the sexual relationships is the influence of good breeding more decisive. An instructive illustration may be gleaned from the minute and precise history of his early life furnished to me by a highly cultured Russian. He was brought up in childhood with his

own brothers and sisters and a little girl of the same age who had been adopted from infancy, the child of a prostitute who had died soon after the infant's birth. The adopted child was treated as one of the family, and all the children supposed that she was a real sister. Yet from early years she developed instincts unlike those of the children with whom she was nurtured; she lied, she was cruel, she loved to make mischief, and she developed precociously vicious sexual impulses; though carefully educated, she adopted the occupation of her mother, and at the age of twenty-two was exiled to Siberia for robbery and attempt to murder. The child of a chance father and a prostitute mother is by no means fatally devoted to ruin; but such a child is ill-bred, and that fact, in some cases, may neutralize all the influences of good nurture.

When we reach the period of infancy we have already passed beyond the foundations and potentialities of the sexual life; we are in some cases witnessing its actual beginnings. It is a well-established fact that auto-erotic manifestations may sometimes be observed even in infants of less than twelve months. We are not now called upon to discuss the disputable point as to how far such manifestations at this age can be called normal. A slight degree of menstrual and mammary activity sometimes occurs at birth. It seems clear that nervous and psychic sexual activity has its first springs at this early period, and as the years go by an increasing number of individuals join the stream until at puberty practically all are carried along in the great current.

While, therefore, it is possibly, even probably, true that the soundest and healthiest individuals show no definite signs of nervous and psychic sexuality in childhood, such manifestations are still sufficiently frequent to make it impossible to say that sexual hygiene may be completely ignored until puberty is approaching.

Precocious physical development occurs as a somewhat rare variation. W. Roger Williams, who furnished an important contribution to the knowledge of this anomaly, found it much commoner in girls than in boys, only twenty boys to eighty girls, and precocity is not only more frequent but more pronounced in girls. As Moll and others admit, spermatozoa are sometimes found before the age of thirteen, though Brouardel stated that this was the earliest age in his experience. In the state of New York the age of consent, fixed at eight for girls and ten for boys, was decided (Kiernan informed me) on the basis of a considerable number of cases. Restif de la Bretonne, who exhibited an inordinate sexual activity, believed (as he states in his autobiography, *Monsieur Nicolas*), whether or not correctly, that he had been a father at the age of eight.

Precocious sexual impulses are generally vague, occasional, and more or less innocent, though in very rare cases they may be pronounced from the age of two. The erections that are liable to occur

in male infants have usually no sexual significance, though, as Moll remarked long since, they may acquire it by attracting the child's attention; they are merely reflex. It is believed by some, however, and notably by Freud, that certain manifestations of infant activity, especially thumb-sucking, are of sexual causation, and that the sexual impulse constantly manifests itself at a very early age. The belief that the sexual instinct is absent in childhood, Freud regards as a serious error, so easy to correct by observation that he wonders how it can have arisen. "In reality," he remarks, "the new-born infant brings sexuality with it into the world, sexual sensations accompany it through the days of lactation and childhood, and very few children can fail to experience sexual activities and feelings before the period of puberty." Moll, on the other hand—in his important work on *The Sexual Life of the Child*—considered that Freud's views on sexuality in infancy are exaggerations which must be decisively rejected, though he admitted that it is difficult, if not impossible, to differentiate the feelings in childhood. Moll believed also that psycho-sexual manifestations appearing after the age of eight are not pathological; children who are weakly or of bad heredity are not seldom sexually precocious, but, on the other hand, children of eight or nine with strongly developed sexual impulses may yet become finely developed adults. Löwenfeld, also, on the basis of wide experience as a nerve specialist, deals in some detail with Freud's views in his valuable work *Ueber die Sexuelle Konstitution*, and is quite unable to accept them in an unqualified shape. That the expression of satisfaction on the face of the infant who smiles back satisfied from the breast is not unlike that of the adult gratified by sexual satisfaction may be admitted without assuming that both satisfactions are sexual, or that the adult's similar expression after a meal is sexual. Thumb-sucking and similar manifestations are also simply indications of general activity which only becomes sexual in predisposed individuals. Careful observation shows that masturbation only occurs in a very small proportion of young children, and Löwenfeld is acquainted with cases of persons who have carried on such manifestations as thumb-sucking into later life without any association with sexual activity. It is likewise a mistake to jump to the conclusion that the pleasure children may take in throwing off their garments necessarily implies an exhibitionist impulse; it may more probably arise from the need of being rid of a troublesome pressure, which adults also may experience, without any exhibitionist motive. It remains true, as Löwenfeld concludes, that sexual manifestations at an early age, though exceptional, are more frequent than was formerly supposed. It must, however, be added that they have been recognized by authorities on childhood for more than half a century back. Thus Perez stated that sex impulses may begin in very early childhood

and without being pathological, though specially liable to appear in nervous children, and in his *L'Enfant de Trois à Sept Ans* (1886) he quoted various authors to the same effect.

Rudimentary sexual activities in childhood, accompanied by sexual feelings, must indeed—when they are not too pronounced or too premature—be regarded as coming within the normal sphere, though when they occur in children of bad heredity they are not without serious risks. But in healthy children, after the age of seven or eight, they tend to produce no evil results, and are strictly of the nature of play. Play, both in animals and men, as Groos has shown with marvellous wealth of illustration, is a beneficent process of education; the young creature is thereby preparing itself for the exercise of those functions which in later life it must carry out more completely and more seriously. In his *Spiele der Menschen*, Groos applies this idea to the sexual play of children, and brings forward quotations from literature in evidence. Keller, in his *Romeo und Juliet auf dem Dorfe*, has given an admirably truthful picture of these childish love-relationships.

A kind of rudimentary sexual intercourse between children occurs in many parts of the world, and is recognized by their elders as play. Thus, for instance, among the Bengala of the Upper Congo, as the Rev. J. H. Weeks found, boys and girls have more or less intercourse without public condemnation, but it is notable that illegitimate children are very rare, so that the intercourse is probably not complete. Among the Wa-Sania of British East Africa, youths and girls similarly, according to Hobley, practise what is called *lukh*, that is to say, the youth may insert his penis between the girl's legs and sleep with her thus, without penetration; other tribes in this region are said to have a similar custom. Sexual play has been described at a very early age among the Bawenda of the Transvaal, and among Papuans with the approval of the parents, although much reticence is observed. Godard noted the sexual play of the boys and girls in Cairo. In New Mexico W. A. Hammond saw boys and girls attempting a playful sexual conjunction with the encouragement of men and women, and in New York he had seen boys and girls of three and four doing the same in the presence of their parents, with only a laughing rebuke. "Playing at pa and ma" is indeed extremely common among children in genuine innocence, and is by no means confined to children of low social class. Moll remarked on its frequency, and a committee of evangelical pastors, in their investigation of German rural morality, found that children who are not yet of school age make attempts at coitus. The sexual play of children is by no means confined to father and mother games; frequently there are games of school with the climax in exposure and smackings, and occasionally there are games of being doctors and making examinations. Thus a young English

woman says : " Of course, when we were at school [at the age of twelve and earlier] we used to play with one another, several of us girls ; we used to go into a field and pretend we were doctors and had to examine one another, and then we used to pull up one another's clothes and feel each other.

These games do not necessarily involve the co-operation of the sexual impulse, and still less have they any element of love. But emotions of love, scarcely if at all distinguishable from adult sexual love, frequently appear at equally early ages. They are of the nature of play, in so far as play is a preparation for the activities of later life, though, unlike the games, they are not felt as play. Ramdohr, long ago (*Venus Urania*, 1798), referred to the frequent love of little boys for women. More usually the love is felt towards individuals of the opposite or the same sex who are not widely different in age, though usually older. The first comprehensive study of the matter was made by Sanford Bell in America on a basis of as many as 2,300 cases in the *American Journal Psychology*, 1902. Bell found that the presence of the emotion between three and eight years of age is shown by such actions as hugging, kissing, lifting each other, scuffling, sitting close to each other, confessions to each other and to others, talking about each other when apart, seeking each other and excluding the rest, grief at separation, giving gifts, showing special courtesies to each other, making sacrifices for each other, exhibiting jealousy. The girls are, on the whole, more aggressive than the boys, and less anxious to keep the matter secret. After the age of eight, the girls increase in modesty and the boys become still more secretive. The physical sensations are not usually located in the sexual organs ; erection of the penis and hyperæmia of the female sexual parts Bell regards as marking undue precocity. But there is diffused vascular and nervous tumescence and a state of exaltation comparable, though not equal, to that experienced in adolescent and adult age. On the whole, as Bell soundly concluded, " love between children of opposite sex bears much the same relation to that between adults as the flower does to the fruit, and has about as little physical sexuality in it as an apple-blossom has of the apple that develops from it." Moll also considered that kissing and other similar superficial contacts, which he denominates the phenomena of contrectation, constitute most frequently the first and sole manifestation of the sexual impulse in childhood.

Undoubtedly some of these " contacts " would seem extremely vicious to adults brought up in accordance with the usual adult traditions. But they arise instinctively and spontaneously, and are soon outgrown, if even they are ever experienced. In children of sound heredity Adler has stated that it is common for " sex problems " to appear at the age of four. But such manifestations arise simply and naturally without any " problem." Even among children who

experience problem difficulties, Dr. William Moore, Director of the London Child Guidance Clinic, has lately stated that sex problems are concerned in only 5 per cent. cases.

It is in the home that sex impulses naturally tend to occur. They are therefore liable to be met in connection with near relatives. The careful investigation by Dr. G. V. Hamilton in New York of 100 married men and 100 married women of high intelligence and good social class is here instructive. Flashes of sex feeling towards the mother are recorded by 10 men, and towards the father by 7 women, towards a sister by 28 men, and towards both mother and sister by 10, towards a brother by 5 women. A few others felt such impulse towards more remote relatives. They could not usually remember their ages at the time, but it was, for the most part, between ten and fourteen, though occasionally earlier. But it was found that 46 men and 71 women had never experienced, or could not recall, any feeling of the kind.

These so-called "incestuous" attractions seldom go deep and are quickly outgrown under normal conditions. They usually disappear at once in the presence of some attractive girl or youth from the outside world. The outsider nearly always produces a deeper sexual impression than those figures of daily life who have become familiar by constant association.[1]

It is often stated that it is easier for children to preserve their sexual innocence in the country than in the town, and that only in cities is sexuality rampant and conspicuous. This is by no means true, and in some respects it is the reverse of the truth. Certainly, hard work, a natural and simple life, and a lack of alert intelligence often combine to keep the rural lad chaste in thought and act until the period of adolescence is completed. Ammon, for instance, stated, though without giving definite evidence, that this is common among the Baden conscripts. Certainly, also, all the multiple sensory excitements of urban life tend to arouse the nervous and cerebral excitability of the young at a comparatively early age in the sexual as in other fields, and promote premature desires and curiosities. But, on the other hand, urban life offers the young little gratification for their desires and curiosities. The publicity of a city, the universal surveillance, the studied decorum of a population conscious that it is continually exposed to the gaze of strangers, combine to spread a veil over the esoteric side of life, which, even when at last it fails to conceal from the young the urban stimuli of that life, effectually conceals, for the most part, the gratifications of those stimuli. In the country, however, these restraints do not exist in any corresponding degree; animals render the elemental facts of sexual life clear to all; there is

[1] I have elsewhere discussed this point in relation to "Sexual Selection" and the psychological basis of exogamy.

less need or regard for decorum; speech is plainer; supervision is impossible, and the amplest opportunities for sexual intimacy are at hand. If the city may perhaps be said to favour unchastity of thought in the young, the country may certainly be said to favour unchastity of act.

The question of sexual hygiene, more especially in its special aspect of sexual enlightenment, is not dependent on the fact that in some children the psychic and nervous manifestation of sex appears at an earlier age than in others. It rests upon the larger general fact that in all children the activity of intelligence begins to work at a very early age, and that this activity tends to manifest itself in an inquisitive desire to know many elementary facts of life which are really dependent on sex. The primary and most universal of these desires is the desire to know where children come from. No question could be more natural; the question of origins is necessarily a fundamental one in childish philosophies as, in more ultimate shapes, it is in adult philosophies. Most children, either guided by the statements, usually the mis-statements, of their elders, or by their own intelligence working amid such indications as are open to them, are in possession of a theory of the origin of babies.

Stanley Hall, half a century ago, collected some of the beliefs of young children as to the origin of babies. "God makes babies in heaven, though the Holy Mother and even Santa Claus make some. He lets them down and drops them, and the women or doctors catch them, or He leaves them on the sidewalk, or brings them down a wooden ladder backwards and pulls it up again, or mamma or the doctor or the nurse go up and fetch them, sometimes in a balloon, or they fly down and lose off their wings in some place or other and forget it, and jump down to Jesus, who gives them around. They were also often said to be found in flour-barrels, and the flour sticks ever so long, you know, or they grew in cabbages, or God puts them in water, perhaps in the sewer, and the doctor gets them out and takes them to sick folk that want them, or the early milkman brings them, or they are dug out of the ground; or they are bought at a baby store."

More recently (in 1929) the question was investigated by Dr. G. V. Hamilton in New York among men and women of a presumably well-educated generation: Did your father or mother put you off with the stork or other stories? Only 44 men and 54 women were definitely able to say No to this question, though 19 men and 10 women never asked any question on the subject. But 19 men and the same number of women were given the stork story, while 8 men and 6 women were told that babies are brought by the doctor, and there were exceptional answers of "coming in baskets," "growing on trees," "found in roses," etc. There is no mention of being simply found in a garden or under a gooseberry bush, as seems common in

England. It is notable that even in the seventeenth century Hobbes in his *Leviathan* incidentally remarks that " Children . . . are made to believe by the women that their brothers and sisters are not born but found in the garden." Such information is still not so very uncommon in England where, as storks are unknown (though in 1936 efforts began to be made to introduce them), that popular story has no currency. It is common in many countries, and among the Southern Slavs the stork is said to bring the baby from the water. Even among uncivilized peoples mystery is sometimes cultivated with regard to birth. Thus, among the Bakatla, a Bantu tribe, Mrs. Susan Isaacs states, when small children ask where babies come from they are told the mother gets them from the well.

When children learn that babies come out of the mother's body this knowledge often remains vague and inaccurate. It very commonly happens, for instance, in all civilized countries that the navel is regarded as the baby's point of exit from the body. This is a natural conclusion, since the navel is seemingly a channel into the body, and a channel for which there is no obvious use, while the pudendal cleft would not suggest itself to girls (and still less to boys) as the gate of birth, since it already appears to be monopolized by the urinary excretion. This belief concerning the navel is sometimes preserved through the whole period of adolescence, especially in girls of the so-called educated class, who are too well bred to discuss the matter with their married friends, and believe indeed that they are already sufficiently well informed. At this age the belief may not be altogether harmless, in so far as it leads to the real gate of sex being left unguarded. In Alsace, where girls commonly believe, and are taught, that babies come through the navel, popular folk-tales are current which represent this mistaken belief as leading to loss of virginity.

Even when attempts are made to tell small children where babies come from, the results may not be entirely satisfactory. Hirschfeld recommended the pregnant woman to show her elder child where the coming brother or sister was situated. But such information needs to be combined with a little general biological information. Mrs. Grafton Abbott, an American clinical psychologist, mentions (*Journal of Social Hygiene*, 1933) a little boy told about childbirth and the difficulties of bearing a child, who was one day asked which he would rather have for Christmas, a pony or a baby sister, and replied after careful thought : " Well, I'd really rather have a pony if it wouldn't be too hard on mother."

Of course children, especially nowadays, often know much more than their parents and elderly friends suspect, and the elders in this way are liable to lose credit and trust. Mrs. Abbott, again, tells of two little American boys whose grandfather took them to the Zoo. In the bird-house he pointed to the stork : " Now, boys, there's the

bird that brings the babies." The two little boys got together in a corner and whispered : " Shall we tell him ? "

Even when told nothing, or when incredulous of the stories they are told, children frequently, and indeed usually, by observation and reflection, reach theories of their own. Freud, many years ago, made an investigation of such theories which, he remarked, correspond to the brilliant but defective hypotheses which primitive peoples arrive at concerning the nature and origin of the world. There are three theories which, as Freud concluded, are commonly formed by children. The first, and the most widely disseminated, is that there is no real anatomical difference between boys and girls ; if the boy notices that his little sister has no obvious penis he may conclude that it is because she is too young, and the little girl herself takes the same view. This theory, Freud believed, favours the growth of homosexuality when its germs are present. The second theory is the fæcal theory of the origin of babies. The child, ignorant of the vagina, concludes that the baby is brought into the world by an action analogous to the action of the bowels. The third theory, which is perhaps less prevalent than the others, Freud terms the sadistic theory of coitus. The child realizes that his father must have taken some sort of part in his production. The theory that sexual intercourse consists in violence has in it a trace of truth, but seems to be arrived at rather obscurely. The child's own sexual feelings are often aroused for the first time when wrestling or struggling with a companion ; he may see his mother, also, resisting more or less playfully a sudden caress from his father, and if a real quarrel takes place, the impression may be fortified. As to what the state of marriage consists in, Freud found that it is usually regarded as a state which abolishes modesty ; the most prevalent theory being that marriage means that people can make water before each other, while another common childish theory is that marriage is when people can show each other their private parts.

Thus it is that at an early stage of the child's life we are brought face to face with the question how we may most wisely begin his initiation into the knowledge of the great central facts of sex. It is perhaps a little late in the day to regard it as a question, but so it still often is, although 3,500 years ago (as Amélineau pointed out) the Egyptian father spoke to his child : " I have given you a mother who has carried you within her, a heavy burden, for your sake, and without resting on me. When at last you were born, she indeed submitted herself to the yoke, for during three years were her nipples in your mouth. Your excrements never turned her stomach, nor made her say, ' What am I doing ? ' When you were sent to school she went regularly every day to carry the household bread and beer

to your master. When in your turn you marry and have a child, bring up your child as your mother brought you up."

We may take it for granted, however, that—whatever doubt there may be as to the how or the when—no doubt is any longer possible as to the necessity of taking a deliberate and active part in this sexual initiation, instead of leaving it to the chance revelation of ignorant and perhaps vicious companions or servants. It is becoming more and more widely felt that the risks of ignorant innocence are too great.

We leave instruction in matters of sex, the most sacred and central fact in the world, as Canon Lyttelton put it, to "dirty-minded schoolboys, grooms, garden-boys, anyone, in short, who at an early age may be sufficiently defiled and sufficiently reckless to talk of them." And, so far as girls are concerned, Balzac long ago remarked that "a mother may bring up her daughter severely, and cover her beneath her wings for seventeen years; but a servant-girl can destroy that long work by a word, even by a gesture."

The great part played by servant-girls in the sexual initiation of the children of the middle class I have elsewhere illustrated, and it need not here be discussed. I would only say a word, in passing, on the other side. Often as servant-girls take this part, we must not go so far as to say that it is the case with the majority. As regards Germany, Dr. Alfred Kind has put on record his experience: "I *never*, in youth, heard a bad or improper word on sex-relationships from a servant-girl, although servant-girls followed one another in our house like sunshine and showers in April, and there was always a relation of comradeship between us children and the servants." As regards England, I can add that my own youthful experiences correspond to Dr. Kind's. This is not surprising, for one may say that in the ordinary well-conditioned girl, though her virtue may not be developed to heroic proportions, there is yet usually a natural respect for the innocence of children, a natural sexual indifference to them, and a natural expectation that the male should take the active part when a sexual situation arises. The exceptions are numerous, but they remain exceptions.

It is also beginning to be felt that, especially as regards women, ignorant innocence is not merely too fragile a possession to be worth preservation, but that it is positively mischievous, since it involves the lack of necessary knowledge. "It is little short of criminal," wrote Dr. F. M. Goodchild, "to send our young people into the midst of the excitements and temptations of a great city with no more preparation than if they were going to live in Paradise." In the case of women, ignorance has the further disadvantage that it deprives them of the knowledge necessary for intelligent sympathy with other women. The unsympathetic attitude of women towards women is often largely due to sheer ignorance of the facts of life. "Why,"

writes in a private letter a married lady who keenly realizes this, "are women brought up with such a profound ignorance of their own and especially other women's natures? They do not know half as much about other women as a man of the most average capacity learns in his day's march." We try to make up for our failure to educate women in the essential matters of sex by imposing upon the police and other guardians of public order the duty of protecting women and morals. But, as Moll, insisted, the real problem of chastity lies, not in the multiplication of laws and policemen, but largely in women's knowledge of the dangers of sex and in the cultivation of their sense of responsibility. We are always making laws for the protection of children and setting the police on guard. But laws and the police, whether their activities are good or bad, are in either case alike ineffectual. They can for the most part only be invoked when the damage is already done. We have to learn to go to the root of the matter. We have to teach children to be a law to themselves. We have to give them that knowledge which will enable them to guard their own personalities. There is an authentic story of a lady who had learned to swim, much to the horror of her clergyman, who thought that swimming was unfeminine. "But," she said, "suppose I was drowning." "In that case," he replied, "you ought to wait until a man comes along and saves you." There we have the two methods of salvation which have been preached to women, the old method and the new. In no sea have women been more often in danger of drowning than that of sex. There ought to be no question as to which is the better method of salvation.

It is difficult nowadays to find any serious arguments against the desirability of early sexual enlightenment, and it is only with amusement that we read how the famous French nineteenth-century novelist, Alphonse Daudet, when asked his opinion of such enlightenment, protested—in a spirit certainly common among the men of his time—that it was unnecessary, because boys could learn everything from the streets and the newspapers, while "as to young girls—no! These truths are ugly, disillusioning, sure to shock, to frighten, to disgust the mind, the nature, of a girl." It is as much as to say that there is no need to supply sources of pure water when there are puddles in the street that anyone can drink of. A contemporary of Daudet's, who possessed a finer spiritual insight, Coventry Patmore, the poet, protested against "our modern undivine silences," and Metchnikoff, from the scientific side, speaking especially as regards women, declared that "ignorance must be counted the most immoral of acts." Moreover the old ideas, expressed by Daudet, that the facts of sex are ugly and disillusioning, and that they shock the mind of the young, are both alike entirely false.

While, however, it is now widely recognized that children are

entitled to sexual enlightenment, it cannot be said that this belief is widely put into practice. Many persons, who are fully persuaded that children should sooner or later be enlightened concerning the sexual sources of life, are somewhat nervously anxious as to the precise age at which this enlightenment should begin. Their latent feeling seems still to be that sex is an evil, and enlightenment concerning sex also an evil, however necessary, and that the chief point is to ascertain the latest moment to which we can safely postpone this necessary evil. Such an attitude is altogether wrong-headed. The child's desire for knowledge concerning the origin of himself is a perfectly natural, honest, and harmless desire, so long as it is not perverted by being thwarted. A child of four may ask questions on this matter, simply and spontaneously. As soon as the questions are put they should be answered, in the same simple and spontaneous spirit, truthfully, though according to the measure of the child's intelligence and his capacity and desire for knowledge. This period should not, and, if these indications are followed, naturally would not, in any case, be delayed beyond the sixth year. After that age even the most carefully guarded child is liable to contaminating communications from outside. Moll points out that the sexual enlightenment of girls in its various stages ought to be always a little ahead of that of boys, and as the development of girls up to the pubertal age is more precocious than that of boys, this demand is reasonable.

If the elements of sexual education are to be imparted in early childhood, it is quite clear who ought to be the teacher. There should be no question that this privilege belongs by every right to the mother. Except where a child is artificially separated from his chief parent it is indeed only the mother who has any natural opportunity of receiving and responding to these questions. It is unnecessary for her to take any initiative in the matter. The inevitable awakening of the child's intelligence and the evolution of his boundless curiosity furnish her love and skill with all opportunities for guiding her child's thoughts and knowledge. Nor is it necessary for her to possess the slightest technical information at this stage. It is only essential that she should have the most absolute faith in the purity and dignity of her physical relationship to her child, and be able to speak of it with frankness and tenderness. When that essential condition is fulfilled every mother has all the knowledge that her young child needs.

Among the best authorities, both men and women, in all the countries where this matter is attracting attention, there seems now to be unanimity of opinion in favour of the elementary facts of the baby's relationship to its mother being explained to the child by the mother as soon as the child begins to ask questions. Thus in Germany long ago Moll repeatedly argued in this sense ; he insisted that sexual

enlightenment should be mainly a private and individual matter; that in schools there should be no general and personal warnings about masturbation, etc. (though at a later age he approved of instruction in regard to venereal diseases), but that the mother is the proper person to impart intimate knowledge to the child, and that no age is too early for the commencement of such enlightenment, provided it is put into a form fitted for the age.

In England, and even more in America, this is now the common belief, alike in the medical profession, among teachers, and among leaders in women's movements. It is only when the mother fails that we must fall back on the teacher for elementary information, and that is unfortunate on various grounds and not least because it inevitably happens at an unduly late period of the child's life. Thirty years ago, however, and probably still too often to-day, the mothers had failed in their duty. In 1911 Dr. Arthur Sibly, President of the Private Schools Association, wrote to me: "I hope with you that the time will come when boys' parents will give appropriate instruction to their children, but certainly not one in ten of the boys who come to me have ever received instruction from their parents and I feel it to be my clear duty to supply the deficiency." And in Germany in 1912 an elementary schoolmaster found that only one boy in 28 in the highest class had received any sex instruction from his father, though the others had picked up information in undesirable ways, and only 2 girls in 28 had been told of sex by their mothers.

If, as few now believe should be the case, the first initiation is delayed to the tenth year or later, there is the difficulty that it is no longer so easy to talk simply and naturally about such things; the mother is beginning to feel too shy to speak for the first time about these difficult subjects to a son or a daughter who is nearly as big as herself. She feels that she can only do it awkwardly and ineffectively, and she probably decides not to do it at all. Thus an atmosphere of mystery is created with all the embarrassing and perverting influences which mystery encourages.

There can be no doubt that, more especially in highly intelligent children with vague and unspecialized yet insistent sexual impulses, the artificial mystery with which of old sex was too often clothed not only accentuated the natural curiosity but also tended to favour the morbid intensity and even prurience of the sexual impulse. This was recognized by Dr. Beddoes, even at the beginning of the nineteenth century: "No part of the history of human thought," he wrote, "would perhaps be more singular than the stratagems devised by young people in different situations to make themselves masters or witnesses of the secret. And every discovery, due to their own inquiries, can but be so much oil poured upon an imagination in flames." Kaan, again, in one of the earliest books on morbid sexuality,

set down mystery as one of the causes of *psychopathia sexualis*. Much more recently Mrs. Ennis Richmond, in a wise book of advice to mothers, remarked that it is the *secrecy* that surrounds certain parts of the body and their functions that gives them their danger in the child's thought. Little children, from earliest years, are taught to think of these parts of their body as mysterious, and not only so, but that they are mysterious because they are unclean. If you have to speak to your child, you allude to them mysteriously and in a half-whisper. Before everything it is important that your child should have a good working name for these parts of his body, and for their functions, to use and to hear as naturally and openly as though he or you were speaking of his head or his foot. Convention has made it impossible to speak in this way in public. But you can break through this in the nursery. It is easy to say to a child the first time he makes an "awkward" remark in public: "Look here, laddie, you may say what you like to me or to daddy, but, for some reason or other, one does not talk about these" (only say *what* things) "in public." Sex must always be a mystery, but, as Mrs. Richmond rightly said, the real mysteries of generation are not those with which vulgar secretiveness surrounded them.

The question as to the precise names to be given to the more private bodily parts and functions is sometimes a little difficult to solve. Every mother will naturally follow her own instincts, and probably her own traditions, in this matter. I have elsewhere pointed out (in the study of "The Evolution of Modesty") how widespread and instinctive is the tendency to adopt constantly new euphemisms in this field. The ancient and simple words, which in England a great poet like Chaucer could still use rightly and naturally, are so often dropped in the mud by the vulgar that there is an instinctive hesitation nowadays in applying them to beautiful uses, so that even when a man of genius like D. H. Lawrence used them, his good taste seemed questionable. They are, in their origin, the most dignified and expressive words. Many persons are of opinion that on this account they should be rescued from the mud, and their sacredness taught to children. A medical friend writes that he always taught his son that the vulgar sex names are really beautiful words of ancient origin, and that when we understand them aright we cannot possibly see in them any motive for low jesting. They are simple, serious, and solemn words, connoting the most central facts of life, and only to ignorant and plebian vulgarity can they cause obscene mirth. An American man of science, who once privately and anonymously printed some pamphlets on sex questions, also took this view, and consistently and methodically used the ancient and simple words. I am of opinion that this is the ideal to be sought, but that there are obvious difficulties in attaining it. In any case, however, the mother should be in

possession of a precise vocabulary for all the bodily parts and acts which it concerns her children to know.

It used to be said that at this early age children should not be told, even in a simple and elementary form, the real facts of their origin but should, instead, hear a fairy-tale having in it perhaps some kind of symbolic truth. To reject this contention is not to deny the important place which fairy-tales hold in the imagination of young children. Fairy-tales have a real value to the child, they are a mental food he needs if, he is not to be spiritually starved. But not only are sex matters too vital even in childhood to be safely made matter for a fairy-tale, but the real facts are themselves as wonderful as any fairy-tale, and appeal to the child's imagination with as much force as a fairy-tale.

Even, however, if there were no other reasons against telling children fairy-tales of sex instead of the real facts, there is one reason which ought to be decisive with every mother who values her influence over her child. He will quickly discover, either by information from others or by his own natural intelligence, that the fairy-tale, that was told him in reply to a question about a simple matter of fact, was a lie. With that discovery his mother's influence over him in all such matters vanishes for ever, for not only has a child a horror of being duped, but he is extremely sensitive about any rebuff of this kind, and never repeats what he has been made to feel was a mistake to be ashamed of. He will not trouble his mother with any more questions on this matter; he will not confide in her; he will himself learn the art of telling "fairy-tales" about sex matters. He had turned to his mother in trust; she had not responded with equal trust, and she must suffer the punishment, as Henriette Fürth put it, of seeing "the love and trust of her son stolen from her by the first boy he makes friends with in the street." When, as sometimes happens, a mother goes on repeating these silly stories to a girl or boy of seven who is secretly well informed, she only degrades herself in her child's eyes. It was this fatal mistake, once so often made by mothers, which might at first lead them to imagine that their children are so innocent and in later years cause them many hours of bitterness when they realize they do not possess their children's trust. In the matter of trust it is for the mother to take the first step; the children who do not trust their mothers are, for the most part, merely remembering the lesson they learned at their mother's knee.

Fifty years ago, it may fairly be said, there were no books attempting to make the elementary facts of sex intelligible to children. To-day there are a vast and ever-increasing number of them, and of the most various quality. The pioneering books, while often charmingly done, may now be considered out of date. They included in England booklets by Ellis Ethelmer (Ben Elmy), *Baby Bud* and *The Human Flower*, and in America Margaret Morley's *Song of Life* (1891), and for

the boy or girl at puberty M. A. Warren's *Almost Fourteen*, written by a school teacher in 1892. The last was a charming and delicately written book, which could not have offended the innocence of the most sensitive maiden. Nothing, however, is sacred to prurience, and it was easy for the prurient to capture the law and obtain (in 1897) legal condemnation of this book as "obscene." Anything which sexually excites a prurient mind is, it is true, "obscene" for that mind, for, as Theodore Schroeder remarks, obscenity is "the contribution of the reading mind," but we need such books as this in order to diminish the number of prurient minds, and the condemnation of so admirable a book makes, not for morality, but for immorality. I am told that the book was subsequently issued anew with most of its best portions omitted, and it is stated by Schroeder that the author was compelled to resign his position as a public school principal.

These early books were frequently issued in a semi-private manner, seldom easy to procure or to hear of. The propagation of such books seemed to be felt to be almost a disgraceful action, only to be performed by stealth. And such a feeling was not unnatural when we see, as in the case of the author of *Almost Fourteen*, that a nominally civilized country, instead of loading with honours a man who has worked for its moral and physical welfare, seeks so far as it can to ruin him.

A revolutionary change took place in this field early in the present century. The age-long ban on sexual enlightenment seemed somehow to have been suddenly raised. There was a wild and often ill-informed effort on every side to fill the gap suddenly revealed. By 1915 it was possible for Duck to print in the *Archiv für Sexualforschung* a bibliography of sexual pedagogy extending to twenty pages. In 1917 in the Proceedings of the Mannheim Convention of *Sexualpedagogik* the bibliography of works on the subject published during the preceding ten years contained 170 items. They have been appearing at an equally rapid rate ever since and have long ceased to be easily countable.

It is impossible to give a fair and comprehensive list of the best books now available on the subject of sexual enlightenment in early life, whether for children or for the guidance of their parents. They are both too numerous and too various in quality. As a general guide to those seeking bibliographical information, I may refer to the New York *Journal of Social Hygiene*, which during the past twenty years has frequently referred to this question, publishing lists and reviews of books, and giving details of the progress made along this line. I will here only mention two books of acknowledged value: *How a Baby is Born*, by Karl de Schweinitz, which is written for children, and is now termed a "classic," and *An Introduction to Sex Education*, by Winifred Richmond, written for parents, and really

more than a guide to early sexual enlightenment since it covers a large part of the whole field of sex. Both these books, though of American origin, are also published in England.

I may add that while it would usually be very helpful to a mother to be acquainted with a few good books, she would do well, in actually talking to her children, to rely mainly on her own knowledge and inspiration.

The sexual education which it is the mother's duty and privilege to initiate during her child's early years cannot and ought not to be technical. It is not of the nature of formal instruction but is a private and intimate initiation. No doubt the mother must herself be taught. But the education she needs is mainly an education in love and insight. The actual facts which she requires to use at this early stage are simple. Her main task is to make clear the child's own intimate relation to herself and to show that all young things have a similar intimate relation to their mothers; in generalizing on this point the egg is the simplest and most fundamental type to explain the origin of the individual life, for the idea of the egg—in its widest sense as the seed—not only has its truth for the human creature but may be applied throughout the animal and vegetable world. In this explanation the child's physical relationship to his father is not necessarily at first involved; it may be left to a further stage or until the child's questions lead up to it.

Apart from his interest in his origin, the child is also interested in his sexual, or as they seem to him exclusively, his excretory organs, and in those of other people, his sisters and parents. On these points, at this age, his mother may simply and naturally satisfy his simple and natural curiosity, calling things by precise names, whether the names used are common or uncommon being a matter in regard to which she may exercise her judgment and taste. In this manner the mother will, indirectly, be able to safeguard her child at the outset against the prudish and prurient notions alike which he will encounter later. She will also without unnatural stress be able to lead the child into a reverential attitude towards his own organs and so exert an influence against any undesirable tampering with them. In talking with him about the origin of life and about his own body and functions, in however elementary a fashion, she will have initiated him both in sexual knowledge and in sexual hygiene.

The mother who establishes a relationship of confidence with her child during these first years will probably, if she possesses any measure of wisdom and tact, be able to preserve it even after the epoch of puberty into the difficult years of adolescence. But as an educator in the narrower sense her functions will, in most cases, end at or before puberty. A somewhat more technical and completely impersonal acquaintance with the essential facts of biology, properly including

sex, then becomes desirable, and this should usually be supplied by the school.

There can be no doubt, I repeat, that the ideally best sex enlightenment for the child, boy or girl, should come from the mother and begin at a very early age. This is here throughout assumed. But it is also to be admitted, and even emphasized, that the mother's training to impart this enlightenment should begin when she is herself a child. Even to-day that preparation has rarely taken place. The result is that still, in countless cases, the young mother feels too incompetent or too shy—even if not quite so often as in former days too disgusted over sex—to approach the subject at the right moment. It is not only in America that it is possible to assert as so recently in 1936 Judge Jeanette Brill, speaking from extensive experience in a juvenile court, has asserted in New York: "Parents have been given a fair trial—and have, for the most part, failed utterly."

So we turn to schools and colleges. It is in the United States, and more especially since the Great War, that the most vigorous efforts have been made to introduce lectures and courses of sex education. It was in 1923 that the American Social Hygiene Association brought the matter before the presidents of 479 colleges and universities, with fruitful results. Previously any attempt along this line had been in the mischievous form of sensational warnings against venereal disease. In November, 1931, in the *Journal of Social Hygiene*, Dr. Exner dealt in much detail with what had been done in 105 institutes (not a complete list) which had introduced courses or lectures. He found that the large State Universities had been less active than collegiate institutions of more moderate size. Most of the instruction appears to be along comprehensive and excellent lines.

But we hear little, in America or elsewhere, of biological instruction in elementary or even high schools. To wait until the boy or girl goes, or fails to go, to college is to wait too long. Judge Jeanette Brill writes that everything about sex that can reasonably be taught should be taught before the pupil leaves high school, and that there should already be a preparation in the elementary school. It is essential in any case that the pupil, boy or girl, should be prepared beforehand to meet sensibly the changes that occur at puberty. A physician, male or female, should be associated with the staff of every school, or at all events every high school, able, if necessary, in addition to general courses, to give special advice to groups or individuals.

There can be no doubt, however, that while in the future the school will most probably be regarded as the proper place in which to teach the elements of biology—and not as at present a merely emasculated and effeminated physiology—the introduction of such reformed teaching generally is as yet impracticable in many communities. A coarse and ill-bred community moves in a vicious circle. Its members

are brought up to believe that sex matters are filthy, and when they become adults they protest violently against their children being taught this filthy knowledge. The teacher's task is thus rendered, at the best, difficult. We cannot hope for any immediate introduction of sexual physiology into schools, even in the widely biological form in which alone it could properly be introduced, that is to say as a natural and inevitable part of general education.

This objection to animal physiology by no means applies, it is true, to botany. Botany admits of much incidental instruction in the fundamental facts of sex. The expounder of sex in plants also has on his side the advantage of being able to assert, without question, the entire beauty of the sexual process. He is not confronted by the false associations which have made it difficult either to see or to show the beauty of sex in animals. From the sex-life of plants to the sex-life of the lower animals there is but a step.

That step, however, is often not taken. Prudery has stood in the way. Ever since the eighteenth-century pioneers in the cause of sexual enlightenment have advocated that it should begin with botany, but it had not occurred to them that it might often stop there. "My mother began with a lily," said a girl to Mrs. Abbott, "and she ended with a lily." The result is that to-day there is a tendency to treat with contempt the sex enlightenment conveyed through flowers. Provided, however, that from the first the sexual organs of flowers are brought into line with those of animals, in a wide biological outlook, botany remains acceptable in this field.

The transition from botany to the elementary zoology of the lower animals, to human anatomy and physiology, and to the science of anthropology based on these, is simple and natural. Sex enters into all these subjects and should not be artificially excluded from them in the education of either boys or girls. The text-books from which the sexual system is entirely omitted ought no longer to be tolerated. The nature and secretion of the testicles, the meaning of the ovaries and of menstruation, as well as the significance of metabolism and the urinary excretion, should be clear in their main lines to all boys and girls who have reached the age of puberty.

At puberty there arises a new and powerful reason why boys and girls should receive definite instruction in matters of sex. Before that age it is possible for the foolish parent to imagine that a child may be preserved in ignorant innocence. At puberty that belief is obviously no longer possible. The efflorescence of puberty with the development of the sexual organs, the appearance of hair in unfamiliar places, the general related organic changes, the spontaneous and perhaps alarming occurrence in boys of seminal emissions, and in girls of menstruation, the unaccustomed and sometimes acute recognition of sexual desire accompanied by new sensations in the sexual organs and

leading perhaps to masturbation ; all these arouse, as we cannot fail to realize, a new anxiety in the boy's or girl's mind, and a new curiosity, all the more acute in many cases because it is carefully concealed as too private, and even too shameful, to speak of to anyone. In boys, especially if of sensitive temperament, the suffering thus caused may be keen and prolonged.

Innumerable narratives have been put on record during the past fifty years setting forth the tragic and sometimes life-long results of the lack of sexual enlightenment due to ignorance, false tradition, prudery, quackery, and, too often, the mistaken views of physicians. Even seminal emissions during sleep have sometimes been a prolonged source of apprehension and misery. Masturbation has been a still more frequent source of anxiety. The majority of people have at some period practised masturbation occasionally, or even frequently, but provided they were of sound constitution and heredity, they have been none the worse. It is only when masturbation is followed by anxiety and remorse and a sense of moral guilt that it becomes a mischievous influence. That fact is at last becoming recognized in the medical profession, but it has still not penetrated throughout the general public. As regards the prevalence of masturbation, which is the most commonly recognized form of auto-erotism, many estimates are put forward, sometimes recklessly and at random. The best conclusions, as reached by a careful student, O. L. Harvey (in the *Journal of Social Psychology* for February 1932) are based on the most reliable results of seven leading investigators, all American (though this fact does not probably involve any important national difference) and all dealing with individuals above rather than below the average social and educational level. It is found that by the age of twenty-one 75 per cent. men and 30 per cent. women represented the approximate median percentages of subjects clearly admitting previous auto-erotic practices in the form of "masturbation." The numbers before the age of twelve was for each sex 15, and rises regularly for both sexes (but for boys steeply between the ages of twelve and fifteen) up to twenty-one, and beyond in case of investigators dealing with later ages. It is important to note that these figures represent minima, for they only include subjects clearly and definitely admitting the practices in question. The actual percentages are certainly larger, especially perhaps in the case of women who might be more reserved in their admissions, and also sometimes indulge in auto-erotic practices without being aware of their nature.

The girl at puberty is usually less keenly and definitely conscious of her sexual nature than the boy. But the risks she runs from sexual ignorance, though for the most part different, are more subtle and less easy to repair. She is often extremely inquisitive concerning these matters ; the thoughts of adolescent girls, and often their conversation

among themselves, revolve much around sexual and allied mysteries. Even in the matter of conscious sexual impulse the girl is often not so widely different from her brother, nor so much less likely to escape the contamination of evil communications, so that the ancient scruples of foolish and ignorant persons who dreaded to " sully her purity " by proper instruction were exceedingly misplaced.

Conversations dealing with the important mysteries of human nature, Obici and Marchesini were told by women who had formerly been pupils in Italian Normal Schools, are the order of the day in schools and colleges, and specially circle around procreation, the most difficult mystery of all. In England, even in the best and most modern colleges, in which games and physical exercise are much cultivated, I was told in former years (no doubt conditions are now changed) that " the majority of the girls are entirely ignorant of all sexual matters, and understand nothing whatever about them. But they do wonder about them, and talk about them constantly." Under the free social order of America the same results were found. Judge Ben Lindsey, thirty years ago, found that girls as well as boys sometimes possess manuscript books in which they have written down the crudest sexual things. These children were often sweet-faced, pleasant, refined and intelligent, and they had respectable parents ; but no one had ever spoken to them of sex matters, except the worst of their school-fellows or some coarse-minded and reckless adult. Only in one in twenty cases had the parents ever spoken to the children of sexual subjects. The parents usually imagined that their children were absolutely ignorant of these matters. Lindsey considered that nine-tenths of the schoolchildren, in town or country, are very inquisitive regarding matters of sex, and, to his own amazement, he found that in the girls this is as marked as in the boys.

It is the business of the girl's mother, at least as much as of the boy's, to watch over her child from the earliest years and to win her confidence in all the intimate and personal matters of sex. With these aspects the school cannot properly meddle. But in matters of physical sexual hygiene, notably menstruation, in regard to which all girls stand on the same level, it is certainly the duty of the teacher to take an actively watchful part, and, moreover, to direct the general work of education accordingly, and to ensure that the pupil shall rest whenever that may seem to be desirable. This is part of the elements of the education of girls. To disregard it should disqualify a teacher from taking further share in educational work. Yet it has been constantly and persistently neglected. A large number of girls have not been prepared by their mothers or teachers for the first onset of the menstrual flow, sometimes with disastrous results both to their bodily and mental health. Girls are not even prepared, in many cases, for the appearance of the pubic hair. This unexpected growth of

hair has frequently caused young girls much secret worry, and often they have carefully cut it off.

One would like to believe that these elementary facts were to-day known to teachers, whom they so closely concern. Unfortunately that is still far from being so. Thus, as regards England, Dr. Crichton-Miller, an experienced physician and at the time Honorary Director of the London Institute of Medical Psychology, stated at the 1932 Centenary Meeting of the British Medical Association that there seem to be two cardinal tenets among teachers in boarding schools : the first is that no girl masturbates unless she is " quite abnormal," and the other is that no boy masturbates unless he is " definitely vicious." The girl, if detected, is taken to a " specialist," and the boy is dealt with as " a delinquent to be castigated or a sinner to be reformed." The results are even worse if there is evidence of the trivial homosexual tendencies not uncommon in youth, though in girls mostly taking shape in romantic " raves " or " crushes," frequently directed towards a teacher. One can only hope that the teachers so strangely ignorant of youth may in time be eliminated from the profession they are so unfitted to exercise.

The failure to instruct girls regarding the onset of menstruation may sometimes be almost as disastrous as the failure to impart information on the other aspects of sex, and it is even more surprising since we are here concerned with an inevitable physiological manifestation. Yet it is ancient and widespread. At the middle of the last century, Tilt, a distinguished gynæcologist, stated that among nearly 1,000 women he found that 25 per cent. had been totally unprepared for the onset of menstruation and that their alarmed and mischievous reactions sometimes led to serious impairment of health. In America, half a century later, Dr. Helen Kennedy found that a still larger proportion of high-school girls had no knowledge whatever beforehand, and less than half the girls examined had felt free to talk with their mothers on the subject. Elder sisters and governesses seldom refer to the matter. It was in France, some years ago, that a girl of fifteen threw herself into the Seine, and on being rescued said that she had been driven to despair by the attack of an " unknown disease," which turned out to be simply menstruation. There have doubtless been other girls in the like state who were never rescued. It sometimes also happens that young girls, by making frantic efforts to check this mysterious hæmorrhage, reduce themselves to a state of life-long invalidism.

Up to a century ago the sexual life of girls was ignored by their parents and teachers from reasons of prudishness ; at a later date, when quite different ideas prevailed regarding feminine education, it was ignored on the ground that girls should be as independent of their physiological sexual life as boys are. The fact that this mischievous

neglect prevailed equally under such different conditions indicates clearly that the varying reasons assigned for it were merely the cloaks of ignorance. The pathos of the situation has indeed been—at all events in the past, for to-day a more enlightened generation is growing up—that the very leaders of the woman's movement often betrayed the cause of women. They adopted the ideals of men, they urged women to become second-rate men, they declared that the healthy natural woman disregards the presence of her menstrual functions. "They claim," remarked Engelmann at this time, "that woman in her natural state is the physical equal of man, and constantly point to the primitive woman, the female of savage peoples, as an example of this supposed axiom. Do they know how well this same savage is aware of the weakness of woman and her susceptibility at certain periods of her life and with what care he protects her from harm at these periods?" The facts are set forth at length in the great work of Ploss and Bartels on *Woman*.

Forty years ago it was necessary to emphasize the menstrual "invalidism" of women and the sexual ill-health which prevailed in girls' schools, alike in Great Britain and America and elsewhere. Investigations at that time and earlier, by physicians of both sexes, showed that in schools and colleges the proportion of girls suffering more or less during their menstrual periods ranged from round about 50 per cent. to sometimes even as high as 90 per cent. Since then a great change has occurred due to better hygiene, a more healthy life, open-air exercise, and games. It is still necessary to pay careful attention to the establishment of the menstrual function, and many physicians advise special consideration for girls during the monthly period. But the general health of school girls is greatly improved. Thus, in a large high-class English school, Dr. Alice Clow, its medical inspector, found that during a period of four years there was a steady improvement in the health of the girls.[1]

It seems to be clear that the main factor in the common sexual and general invalidism of girls and young women was bad hygiene, in the first place consisting in neglect of the menstrual functions and in the second place in faulty habits generally. In all the more essential matters that concern the hygiene of the body the traditions of girls have been inferior to those of boys. Women are much more inclined than men to subordinate these things to what seems to them some more urgent interest or fancy of the moment; they were trained to wear awkward and constricting garments; they were indifferent to regular and substantial meals, preferring innutritious and indigestible

[1] It is interesting to compare the chapter on "The Functional Periodicity of Women" in the eighth (1934) edition of my *Man and Woman* with the original edition some forty years earlier and the very different results set forth regarding the health of women.

foods and drinks and apt to disregard the demands of the bowels and the bladder out of laziness or modesty ; they were even indifferent to physical cleanliness. In a great number of minor ways, which separately may seem to be of little importance, they played into the hands of an environment which, not always having been adequately adjusted to their special needs, would exert a considerable stress and strain even if they carefully sought to guard themselves against it.

It must always be remembered that in realizing the special demands of woman's nature, we do not commit ourselves to the belief that higher education is unfitted for a woman. That question may now be regarded as settled. There is therefore no longer any need for the feverish anxiety of the early leaders of feminine education to prove that girls can be educated exactly as if they were boys, and yield at least as good educational results. At the present time, indeed, that anxiety is not only unnecessary but mischievous. It is now more necessary to show that women have special needs just as men have special needs, and that it is as bad for women, and therefore for the world, to force them to accept the special laws and limitations of men as it would be bad for men, and therefore for the world, to force men to accept the special laws and limitations of women. Each sex must seek to reach the goal by following the laws of its own nature, even although it remains desirable that, both in the school and in the world, they should work so far as possible side by side. The great fact to be remembered always is that, not only are women, in physical size and physical texture, slighter and finer than men, but more delicately poised, and any kind of stress or strain—cerebral, nervous, or muscular—is more likely to produce serious disturbance and requires an accurate adjustment to their special needs. I long ago noticed that women who have lived a robust and athletic outdoor life, far from always having the easy confinements we might anticipate, sometimes have seriously difficult times, imperilling the life of the child. On making this observation to a distinguished obstetrician, Dr. Engelmann, who was an ardent advocate of physical exercise for women, he replied that he had himself made the same observation, and that instructors in physical training, both in America and England, had also told him of such cases among their pupils. " *Athletics, i.e.*, overdone physical training, causes the girl's system to approximate to the masculine ; this is so whether due to sport or necessity. The woman who indulges in it approximates to the male in her attributes ; this is marked in diminished sexual intensity, and in increased difficulty of childbirth, with, in time, lessened fecundity. Healthy habits improve, but masculine muscular development diminishes, womanly qualities."

Women are constantly attaining a higher degree of proficiency in various sports. This may be welcomed, so long as it is accepted that it is undesirable and unnecessary for women to compete in the coarser

forms of athletics for which men are constitutionally better fitted for success. There is some evidence to indicate that women who achieve athletic successes are not of typical feminine proportions in body, and there is some reason to suppose that women leading active muscular outdoor life, unless they have grown used to it from early childhood, are liable to suffer in their sexual life. Some years ago Dr. Angenette Parry in America studied the relation of athletics to women's reproductive life, and though the results were contradictory, it appeared that competitive athletics were, on the whole, bad.

The recent (1936) conclusions of E. Vogt in Germany are much to the same effect. He finds that in general the effect of gymnastic exercises and sport on the feminine organization is favourable. But adaptation of the exercises to the special constitution is called for, as well as moderation before growth is completed. Swimming is much to be preferred to gymnastics at any age and strengthens the muscles of the belly and pelvic floor. During the early menstrual epoch there should be no strenuous exercises, and after menstruation is well established, sports that are competitive should be avoided during the periods. Menstrual troubles are, however, aided by sportive exercises, and there is no evidence that they induce malposition of the uterus.

A proper recognition of the special nature of woman, of her peculiar needs and capacities, has a significance beyond its importance in education and hygiene. The traditions and training to which she is subjected in this matter have a subtle and far-reaching significance, according as they are good or evil. If she is taught, implicitly or explicitly, contempt for the characteristics of her own sex, she naturally develops masculine ideals which may permanently discolour her vision of life and distort her practical activities; it has been found that as many as 50 per cent. of American school girls have masculine ideals, while 15 per cent. American and no fewer than 34 per cent. English school girls wished to be men, though scarcely any boys wished to be women. With the same tendency may be connected that neglect to cultivate the emotions, which, by a mischievously extravagant but inevitable reaction from the opposite extreme, has sometimes marked the modern training of women. In the finely developed woman, intelligence is interpenetrated with emotion. With an exaggerated and isolated culture of intelligence a tendency for disharmony breaks up the character or impairs its completeness. Within the emotional sphere itself, it may be added, there is a tendency to disharmony in women owing to the contradictory nature of the feelings which have been traditionally impressed upon them, a contradiction which dates back indeed to the identification of sacredness and impurity at the dawn of civilization. "Every girl and woman," wrote Hellmann, in a pioneering book which pushed a sound principle to eccentric extremes, "is taught to regard her sexual parts as a precious and

sacred spot, only to be approached by a husband or, in special circumstances, a doctor. She is, at the same time, taught to regard this spot as a kind of water-closet which she ought to be extremely ashamed to possess, and the mere mention of which should cause a painful blush." The average unthinking woman formerly accepted the incongruity of this opposition without question, and grew accustomed to adapt herself to each of the incompatibles according to circumstances. The more thoughtful woman worked out a private theory of her own. But in many cases this mischievous opposition exerted a subtly perverting influence on the whole outlook towards Nature and life. In a few cases, also, in women of sensitive temperament, it still undermines and ruins the psychic personality.

It is, however, not only in her relations to herself and to her sex that a girl's thoughts and feelings tend to be distorted by the ignorance or the false traditions by which she is so often carefully surrounded. Her happiness in marriage, her whole future career, is put in peril. The innocent young woman must always risk much in entering the door of indissoluble marriage; she knows nothing truly of her husband, she knows nothing of the great laws of love, she knows nothing of her own possibilities, and, worse still, she is even ignorant of her ignorance. She runs the risk of losing the game while she is still only beginning to learn it. To some extent that is inevitable if we are to insist that a woman should bind herself to marry a man before she has experienced the nature of the forces that marriage may unloose in her. A young girl believes she possesses a certain character; she arranges her future in accordance with that character; she marries. Then, in a considerable proportion of cases (five out of six, according to the novelist Bourget), within a year or even a week, she finds she was completely mistaken in herself and in the man she has married; she discovers within her another self, and that self detests the man to whom she is bound. That is a possible fate against which only the woman who has already been aroused to love is entitled to regard herself as fairly protected.

There is, however, a certain kind of protection which it is possible to afford the bride, even without departing from our most conventional conceptions of marriage. We can at least insist that she shall be accurately informed as to the exact nature of her physical relations to her future husband and be safeguarded from the shocks or the disillusions which marriage might otherwise bring. Notwithstanding the decay of prejudices, it is probable that even to-day the majority of women of the so-called educated class marry with only the vaguest and most inaccurate notions, picked up more or less clandestinely, concerning the nature of the sexual relationships. So highly intelligent a woman as Madame Adam stated that she believed herself bound to

marry a man who had kissed her on the mouth, imagining that to be the supreme act of sexual union,[1] and it has frequently happened that women have married sexually inverted persons of their own sex, not always knowingly, but believing them to be men, and never discovering their mistake; in America three women were thus successively married to the same woman, none of them apparently ever finding out the real sex of the "husband." "The civilized girl," as Edward Carpenter remarked, "is led to the 'altar' often in uttermost ignorance and misunderstanding of the sacrificial rites about to be consummated." Certainly more rapes have been effected in marriage than outside it.[2] The girl is full of vague and romantic faith in the promises of love, often heightened by the ecstasies depicted in sentimental novels from which every touch of wholesome reality has been carefully omitted. But when the actual drama of love begins to unroll before her, and she realizes the true nature of the "intoxicating part" she has to play, then, it has often happened, the case is altered; she finds herself altogether unprepared, and is overcome with terror and alarm. All the felicity of her married life may then hang on a few chances, her husband's skill and consideration, her own presence of mind. Hirschfeld records the case of an innocent young girl of seventeen—in this case, it eventually proved, an invert—who was persuaded to marry but on discovering what marriage meant energetically resisted her husband's sexual approaches. He appealed to her mother to explain to her daughter the nature of "wifely duties." But the young wife replied to her mother's expostulations, "If that is my wifely duty then it was your parental duty to have told me beforehand, for, if I had known, I should never have married." The husband in this case, much in love with his wife, sought for eight years to over-persuade her, but in vain, and a separation finally took place.[3] That, no doubt, is an extreme case, but how many innocent young inverted girls never realize their true nature until after marriage, and how many perfectly normal girls are so shocked by the too sudden initiation of marriage that their beautiful early dreams of love never develop slowly and wholesomely into the acceptance of its still more beautiful realities?

[1] This belief seems frequent among young girls in Continental Europe. It forms the subject of one of Marcel Prevost's *Lettres de Femmes*. In Austria, according to Freud, it is not uncommon, exclusively among girls.

[2] Yet, according to English law, rape is a crime which it is impossible for a husband to commit on his wife (see, *e.g.*, Nevill Geary, *The Law of Marriage*, Ch. XV, Sect. v). The performance of the marriage ceremony, however, even if it necessarily involved a clear explanation of marital privileges, cannot be regarded as adequate justification for an act of sexual intercourse performed with violence or without the wife's consent.

[3] In such a case, when the wife is unacquainted with the physical requirements of marriage, thinking it means a mere union of friendship and consequently refuses intercourse, the Catholic Church might hold the marriage invalid and annul it. (Slater's *Manual of Moral Theology*.) This is entirely reasonable and just.

Before the age of puberty the sexual initiation of the child—apart from such scientific information as would form part of school courses in biology—should properly be the exclusive privilege of the mother, or whomsoever it may be to whom the mother's duties are delegated. At puberty more authoritative and precise advice is desirable than the mother may be able or willing to give. It is at this age that she should put into her son's or daughter's hands some one or other of the numerous manuals to which reference has already been made, expounding the wider aspects of the sexual life and the principles of sexual hygiene. The boy or girl is already, we may take it, acquainted with the facts of motherhood, and the origin of babies, as well as, more or less precisely, with the father's part in their procreation. Whatever manual is now placed in his or her hands should at least deal summarily, but definitely, with the sexual relationship, and should also comment, but in no alarmist spirit, on the chief auto-erotic phenomena, not exclusively with masturbation. It has indeed been argued that the boy or girl to whom such literature is presented will merely make it an opportunity for morbid revelry and sensual enjoyment. It can well be believed that this may sometimes happen with boys or girls from whom all sexual facts have always been mysteriously veiled, and that when at last they find the opportunity of gratifying their long-repressed and perfectly natural curiosity they are overcome by the excitement of the event. It could not happen to children who have been naturally and wholesomely brought up. At a later age, during adolescence, there is doubtless great advantage in the plan, now frequently adopted, especially in America, of giving lectures, addresses, or quiet talks to young people of each sex separately. The speaker is usually a specially selected teacher, a doctor or other qualified person who may be brought in for this special purpose.

In Canada, early in the century, the Education Department of Ontario had appointed a teacher to go from school to school, at the option of the local School Boards, to give addresses to classes of boys and girls from the ages of ten or eleven on sexual physiology and anatomy and the right attitude towards sex matters. The Minister of Education was reported as receiving much assurance of the good effects of this work.

It is in the United States, however, that the most comprehensive and thorough attention has been given to this matter. The earlier efforts were unsatisfactory, if not mischievous, largely made up of warnings and goody-goody advice, with emphasis on the awful risks of venereal disease. But they prepared the way for a more constructive sex education. In 1920 the American Social Hygiene Association took up the work and enlarged its scope to cover all fields. In this way the attention of college authorities became focused on their responsibilities in the matter and considerable experimentation

resulted. In 1924 the Association proposed to the Presidents of colleges a joint study of the whole problem in order to work out the best methods, and upwards of 200 universities and colleges appointed committees to co-operate. The subjects explored for integration in this study included biology, psychology, sociology, physiology and hygiene, education, physical education, home economics.[1] Since then there has been steady progress, as also in the high schools where the subjects of sex are being gradually integrated in the curriculum, and all special " emergency " sex lectures superseded.

It is becoming more and more clearly realized that the pioneers in this field who wished to introduce a new and isolated study of " sex " were on the wrong track. Sex enters into all fields of life, and the right way to approach it is not to separate it off for independent study, but to recognize it and give it due weight in every field where it naturally occurs. We do not want specially trained teachers of " sex " in our schools. We need all teachers to be so well trained in their own special subjects that they are able to face and discuss the sexual aspects of these subjects whenever they properly appear. This central point in " sex education " might well be emphasized.

This aspect of life will become more and more firmly integrated in school curricula. But it must equally be emphasized that it will by no means warrant parents in washing their hands of a difficult, even if no longer unpleasant, subject. It has been found by careful investigation that the men and women most likely to be happy in their experiences of life are those whose natural childish curiosities were wholesomely satisfied at the outset. I may quote from the American Social Hygiene Association's *Points for Parents to Remember*, based on the widest experience : " Do you realise that, however useful talks from teachers or books written by experts may be, your child's attitude to sex will be based on your own ? If your own attitude is good, you are the best teacher he can have."

In the pioneering days of sexual enlightenment there was often insistence on the value of a confidential talk between the youth or girl and the family doctor, or other physician, on the subjects connected with this topic. We do not now hear much of this. With the general extension of sex knowledge it should seldom be necessary. In cases of special difficulty it may be desirable, and it should always be available.

Sexual education is no longer a merely medical matter. It is not even exclusively a matter for teachers or parents. We are beginning to realize that it must also enter into social life. If we begin to bring

[1] I am here summarizing Dr. Exner's detailed article, though now out of date, on " Progress in Sex Education," *Journal of Social Hygiene*, October, 1929, also the further article by the same author on Sex Education in the Colleges on the *Journal* for November, 1931

sexual enlightenment to the young we must begin to offer them the opportunities of making use of that enlightenment in their early relations with each other. There is a natural shyness in youth where matters of sex are concerned, especially marked precisely at the period after puberty when such matters are becoming present to consciousness. Neither the family circle nor the school offers much opportunity of overcoming this shyness. Even four years at a co-education school, it has been said, seldom enables the pupils to get beyond "Good morning." It is again in America that efforts are being made to overcome this difficulty. Thus Popenoe, Director of the Institute of Family Relations at Los Angeles, points out the value of social dancing in schools, combined with physical education classes, to enable young people to come together with those of opposite sex under favourable conditions. He is not referring to formal evening parties, for which it is necessary to dress up and which run into the night, but to informal dancing, in ordinary dress, to gramophone or wireless, during the lunch hour or at the close in the afternoon. He also refers to high school "practice teas" to which a class of girls invites a class of boys. These, he states, have been found invaluable, and the more so since, as the invitation extends to a whole class, it is not possible for introvert boys to escape by staying at home. Or two biology classes may go on a collecting trip together.

Beyond all the parental, educational, and social influences concerned in the development of the sexual impulse, there still remain factors too deep for control. Yet we have to recognize them. The flower of sex that blossoms in the body at puberty has its spiritual counterpart which at the same moment blossoms in what is called the soul. The churches from of old have recognized the religious significance of this moment, for it is this period of life that they have appointed as the time of confirmation and similar rites. With the progress of the ages, it is true, such rites become merely formal and apparently meaningless fossils.[1] But they have a meaning nevertheless, and are capable of being again vitalized. Nor in their spirit and essence should they be confined to those who accept supernaturally revealed religion.

The age of puberty, I have said, marks the period at which this new kind of sexual initiation is called for. Before puberty, although the psychic emotion of love frequently develops, as well as sometimes physical sexual emotions that are mostly vague and diffused, definite and localized sexual sensations are rare. For the normal boy or girl love is usually an unspecialized emotion ; it is in Guyau's words

[1] In my own youthful experience, preparation for the final rite of Confirmation at the Bishop's hands consisted in a few hours over the Church Catechism with the curate alone in his study. Many savage tribes enjoy a far nobler initiation, spiritual and practical, into their place in the adult world. Not many youths in our so-called civilization can find, as a few do, their own initiation.

"a state in which the body has but the smallest place." At the first rising of the sun of sex the boy or girl sees, as Blake said he saw at sunrise, not a round yellow body emerging above the horizon, or any other physical manifestation, but a great company of singing angels. With the definite eruption of physical sexual manifestation and desire, whether at puberty or later in adolescence, a new turbulent disturbing influence appears. Against the force of this influence, mere intellectual enlightenment, or even loving maternal counsel—the agencies we have so far chiefly been concerned with—may be powerless. In gaining control of it we must find our auxiliary in the fact that puberty is the efflorescence not only of a new physical but a new psychic force. The ideal world naturally unfolds itself to the boy or girl at puberty. The magic of beauty, the instinct of modesty, the naturalness of self-restraint, the idea of unselfish love, the meaning of duty, the feeling for art and poetry, the craving for religious conceptions and emotions—all these things awake spontaneously in the unspoiled boy or girl at puberty. I say "unspoiled," for if these things have been thrust on the child before puberty when they have yet no meaning for him—as is unfortunately far too often done, more especially as regards religious notions—then it is but too likely that he will fail to react properly at that moment of his development when he would otherwise naturally respond to them. Under natural conditions this is the period for spiritual initiation, for indirectly aiding the young soul to escape from sexual dangers by harnessing his chariot to a star that may help to save it from sticking fast in any miry ruts of the flesh.

Such an initiation, it is important to remark, is more than an introduction to the sphere of religious sentiment. It is an initiation into manhood, it must involve a recognition of the masculine even more than of the feminine virtues. This has been well understood by the finest primitive races. They constantly give their boys and girls an initiation at puberty; it is an initiation that involves not merely education in the ordinary sense, but a stern discipline of the character, feats of endurance, the trial of character, the testing of the muscles of the soul as much as of the body.

Ceremonies of initiation into manhood at puberty—involving physical and mental discipline, as well as instruction, lasting for weeks or months, and never identical for both sexes—are common among savages in all parts of the world. They nearly always involve the endurance of a certain amount of pain and hardship, a wise measure of training which the softness of civilization has too foolishly allowed to drop, for the ability to endure hardness is an essential condition of all real manhood. It was as a corrective to this tendency to flabbiness in modern education that the teaching of Nietzsche seemed so invaluable.

The initiation of boys among the natives of Torres Straits has been elaborately described by Haddon (*Reports Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*, vol. v, Chs. VII and XII). It lasts a month, involves much severe training and power of endurance, and includes admirable moral instruction. Haddon remarks that it formed "a very good discipline," and adds, "it is not easy to conceive of a more effectual means for a rapid training."

Among the aborigines of Victoria, Australia, the initiatory ceremonies, as described by R. H. Mathews ("Some Initiation Ceremonies," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1905, Heft 6), last for seven months, and constitute an admirable discipline. The boys are taken away by the elders of the tribe, subjected to many trials of patience and endurance of pain and discomfort, sometimes involving even the swallowing of urine and excrement, brought into contact with strange tribes, taught the laws and folk-lore, and at the end meetings are held at which betrothals are arranged.

Sollas, who summarized in his *Ancient Hunters* some of the various processes of initiation carried out in Australia, well observes: "It seems a truly remarkable way to celebrate the transformation of Man the irresponsible animal into Man the moral being." The boy or girl, as another writer has put it, is killed, and born again into the world.

Initiation among the African Bawenda, as described by a missionary, is in three stages: (1) A stage of instruction and discipline during which the traditions and sacred things of the tribe are revealed, the art of warfare taught, self-restraint and endurance borne; then the youths are counted as full-grown. (2) In the next stage the art of dancing is practised, by each sex separately, during the day. (3) In the final stage, which is that of complete sexual initiation, the two sexes dance together by night; the scene, in the opinion of the good missionary, "does not bear description"; the initiated are now complete adults, with all the privileges and responsibilities of adults.

The initiation of girls in Azimba Land, Central Africa, has been fully and interestingly described by H. Crawford Angus in the *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1898, Heft 6. At the first sign of menstruation the girl is taken by her mother out of the village to a grass hut prepared for her where only the women are allowed to visit her. At the end of menstruation she is taken to a secluded spot and the women dance round her, no men being present. It was only with much difficulty that Angus was enabled to witness the ceremony. The girl is then informed in regard to the hygiene of menstruation. "Many songs about the relations between men and women are sung, and the girl is instructed as to all her duties when she becomes a wife. . . . The girl is taught to be faithful to her husband, and to try and bear children. The whole matter is looked upon as a matter of course,

and not as a thing to be ashamed of or to hide, and being thus openly treated of and no secrecy made about it, you find in this tribe that the women are very virtuous, because the subject of married life has no glamour for them. When a woman is pregnant she is again danced; this time all the dancers are naked, and she is taught how to behave and what to do when the time of her delivery arrives."

Among the Yuman Indians of California, as described by Horatio Rust (*American Anthropologist,* January to March, 1906) the girls are at puberty prepared for marriage by a ceremony. They are wrapped in blankets and placed in a warm pit, where they lie looking very happy as they peer out through their covers. For four days and nights they lie here (occasionally going away for food), while the old women of the tribe dance and sing round the pit constantly. At times the old women throw silver coins among the crowd to teach the girls to be generous. They also give away cloth and wheat, to teach them to be kind to the old and needy; and they sow wild seeds broadcast over the girls to cause them to be prolific. Finally, all strangers are ordered away, garlands are placed on the girls' heads, and they are led to a hillside and shown the large and sacred stone, symbolical of the female organs of generation and resembling them, which is said to protect women. Then grain is thrown over all present, and the ceremony is over.

I may also quote the following communication I have received from a correspondent in India: "In the matter of sexual education the Palghat or Pattar Brahmin of South India leads the way among the people of the world. Not less than 70 per cent. of the community are literate while more than 5 per cent. can lay claim to a University education on Western models. The habits of daily life in themselves are helpful in depriving sex of its mysteries to the children. These are not segregated in a nursery but are allowed to mingle freely with the adults in eating, talking, and sleeping. Till the fifth or sixth year, children of both sexes are naked and hence from an early period are acquainted with the differences between the sexes. As the confinement, as a rule, takes place in the home itself, these urchins know very well the function of the mother in childbirth. And it is not a rare sight in the villages to see groups of little girls playing with boys of the same age at marriage, confinement, housekeeping, and tending the baby. As they grow up in years the necessity of cleansing the parts after evacuation is impressed upon them by their parents; there is very little need, however, as the children take to it in imitation of their elders. From this point of view the temple also serves as an institution for imparting sexual knowledge. The images and statues are all naked; and on the walls are sometimes painted with a lifelike reality all the processes of the sexual act, which serve as so many

object lessons that the youth of the village imbibe without any formal instruction.

"The systematic initiation of the girls takes place at puberty. Though the marriage ceremony is performed invariably before puberty, and though the young couples allow themselves some liberties in the manner depicted in English novels, the crowning sexual act does not take place till after the girl has attained puberty. The appearance of the first menses in a girl is an event of importance in the village and the cause of much expense to the parents. Either a temporary house is erected for the girl, or a separate room away from the main apartments of the house is allotted to her. All the girls and ladies of the village are invited, and for three full days the parents have to feast them. All these days the girl is danced around with songs describing the sexual act in all its different varieties and refinements. Any male or female going near them is received with a shower of obscene words describing the sexual life or its physiology. An old woman, whose husband is living, is generally in charge of the ceremonies. On the fourth or fifth day after the appearance of the menses, there is a ceremonial bath and the girl is taken in procession to the house.

"In the house certain ceremonies are gone through to ward off the evil eye. The girl is danced round, to the accompaniment this time not of lewd songs but songs describing love. After that, the girl is made to wash a doll and feed with her own hands half-a-dozen babies —a ceremony symbolical of her future duties as a mother."

We pass from savage to civilized rites of this kind through the ancient Greek sacred traditions. The great mysteries of Greece, as Gilbert Murray and others have pointed out, following the evidence brought forward by Mannhardt and Frazer and Van Gennep (in his *Rites de Passage*), are simply initiation ceremonies.

The conception underlying all the varied initiations in social life at puberty, found throughout the world, is well stated by Holmes (in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute* for 1902) when describing the ceremonies practised by the natives of the Papuan Gulf: "Initiation is all-important. On the performance of the instructions he received as an initiate the social and moral welfare of his tribe depends; as an individual he is only a unit of his tribe, but as such he must always conduct himself in all things for the highest interest of his tribe. The knowledge acquired when an initiate must ever be to him a sacred possession."

We have lost these ancient and invaluable rites of initiation into manhood and womanhood, with their inestimable benefits; at the most we have merely preserved the shell of initiation in which the core has decayed. In time, we cannot doubt, they will be revived in new forms. At present the initiation of youths and maidens is left

to the chances of some happy accident, and usually it is of a purely cerebral character, which cannot be perfectly wholesome, and is at the best absurdly incomplete.

How incomplete we may realize when we read the constant laments over youthful criminality, that is to say in the years of adolescence and early adulthood immediately following the time when in a wholesomely organized social state the youth would have been trained to realize his place as a responsible member of society. Private theft, reckless and wilful damage to public property, cruelty to animals—such are the offences of youth which we constantly hear of, all testifying to the absence of any true initiation into social life. Moralists talk seriously of the birch or of Borstal, of all the punishments they would at much cost and trouble inflict upon our youth, punishments which might more suitably descend on their own backs for sending our youth so unprepared into so dangerous a world.

Intellectual initiation commonly occurs to the youth through the medium of literature. The influence of literature in sexual education thus extends, in an incalculable degree, beyond the narrow sphere of manuals on sexual hygiene, however admirable and desirable these may be. The greater part of literature is more or less distinctly penetrated by erotic and auto-erotic conceptions and impulses; nearly all imaginative literature proceeds from the root of sex to flower in visions of beauty and ecstasy. The Divine Comedy of Dante is herein the immortal type of the poet's evolution. The youth becomes acquainted with the imaginative representations of love before he becomes acquainted with the reality of love, so that, as Leo Berg puts it, "the way to love among civilized peoples passes through imagination." All literature is thus, to the adolescent soul, a part of sexual education.[1] It depends, to some extent, though fortunately not entirely, on the judgment of those in authority over the young soul whether the literature to which the youth or girl is admitted is or is not of the large and humanizing order.

All great literature touches nakedly and sanely on the central facts of sex. It was always consoling to remember this is an age of petty pruderies. And it is a satisfaction to know that it would not be possible to emasculate the literature of the great ages, however desirable it might seem to the men of more degenerate ages, or to close the avenues to that literature against the young. All our religious and literary traditions serve to fortify the position of the Bible and of Shakespeare. "So many men and women," writes a correspondent, a literary man, "gain sexual ideas in childhood from

[1] "Poetry is necessarily related to the sexual function," thought Metchnikoff (*Essais Optimistes*, p. 352), who also quoted with approval the statement of Möbius (previously made by Ferrero and many others) that "artistic aptitudes must probably be considered as secondary sexual characters."

reading the Old Testament, that the Bible may be called an erotic text-book." In the same way many a young woman has borrowed a Shakespeare in order to read the glowing erotic poetry of *Venus and Adonis*, which her friends have told her about.

The Bible, it may be remarked, is not in every respect a model introduction for the young mind to the questions of sex. But even its frank acceptance, as of divine origin, of sexual rules so unlike those that are nominally our own, such as polygamy and concubinage, helps to enlarge the vision of the youthful mind by showing that the rules surrounding the child are not those everywhere and always valid, while the nakedness and realism of the Bible cannot but be a wholesome and tonic corrective to conventional pruderies.

We must, indeed, always protest against the absurd confusion whereby nakedness of speech is regarded as equivalent to immorality, and not the less because it is often adopted even in what are regarded as intellectual quarters. When in the House of Lords, in the last century, the question of the exclusion of Byron's statue from Westminster Abbey was under discussion, Lord Brougham "denied that Shakespeare was more moral than Byron. He could, on the contrary, point out in a single page of Shakespeare more grossness than was to be found in all Lord Byron's works." The conclusion Brougham thus reached, that Byron is an incomparably more moral writer than Shakespeare, ought to have been a sufficient *reductio ad absurdum* of his argument, but it does not appear that anyone pointed out the vulgar confusion into which he had fallen.

It may be said that the special attractiveness which the nakedness of great literature sometimes possesses for young minds is unwholesome But it must be remembered that the peculiar interest of this element is merely due to the fact that elsewhere there is an inveterate and abnormal concealment. It must also be said that the statements of the great writers about natural things are never degrading, nor even erotically exciting to the young, and what Emilia Pardo Bazan tells of herself and her delight when a child in the historical books of the Old Testament, that the crude passages in them failed to send the faintest cloud of trouble across her young imagination, is equally true of most children. It is necessary, indeed, that these naked and serious things should be left standing, even if only to counterbalance the lewdly comic efforts to besmirch love and sex which are visible to all in every low-class bookseller's shop window. Every healthy boy and girl who has reached the age of puberty may be safely allowed to ramble in any good library, however varied its contents. So far from needing guidance they will usually show a more refined taste than their elders. At this age, when the emotions are still virginal and sensitive, the things that are realistic, ugly, or morbid jar on the

young spirit and are cast aside, though in adult life, with the coarsening of mental texture which comes of years of experience, this repugnance doubtless by an equally sound and natural instinct, may become much less acute.

Ellen Key, in her *Century of the Child*, well summarized the reasons against the practice of selecting for children books that are " suitable " for them, a practice which she considers one of the follies of modern education. The child should be free to read all great literature, and will himself instinctively put aside the things he is not yet ripe for. His cooler senses are undisturbed by scenes that his elders find too exciting, while even at a later stage it is not the nakedness of great literature, but much more the method of the modern novel, which is likely to stain the imagination, falsify reality, and injure taste. It is concealment which misleads and coarsens. The writings of the great masters yield the imaginative food which the child craves, and the erotic moment in them is too brief to be overheating. Many years earlier Ruskin, in *Sesame and Lilies*, had eloquently urged that even young girls should be allowed to range freely in libraries.

What has been said about literature applies equally to art. Art, as well as literature, and in the same indirect way, can be made a valuable aid in the task of sexual enlightenment and sexual hygiene. Even if modern art, for the most part, is ignored from this point of view, children cannot be too early familiarized with the representations of the nude in ancient sculpture and in the paintings of the old masters of the Italian school. In this way they may be immunized, as Enderlin expresses it, against those representations of the nude which make an appeal to the baser instincts. Early familiarity with nudity in art is at the same time an aid to the attainment of a proper attitude towards purity in nature. " He who has once learnt," as Höller remarks, " to enjoy peacefully nakedness in art will be able to look on nakedness in nature as on a work of art."

It is now usual to conduct schoolchildren for hurried visits to important picture exhibitions. It would be better to paint suitable frescoes on the schoolroom walls, while casts of classic nude statues and reproductions of the pictures of the old Venetian and other Italian masters may fittingly be used to adorn schoolrooms, not so much as objects of instruction as things of beauty with which the child cannot too early become familiarized.

There can be no doubt that such early familiarity with the beauty of nudity in classic art is widely needed among all social classes and in many countries. It is to this defect of our education that we must attribute the occasional, and indeed in America and England, frequent, occurrence of such incidents as petitions and protests against the exhibition of nude statuary in art museums, the display of inoffensive nudes in shop windows, and the demand for the draping of the naked

personifications of abstract virtues in architectural street decoration. So imperfect is still the education of the multitude that in these matters the ill-bred fanatic of pruriency usually gains his will. Such a state of things cannot but have an unwholesome reaction on the moral atmosphere of the community in which it is possible. Even from the religious point of view, prurient prudery is not justifiable. Northcote (in his *Christianity and Sex Problems*) temperately and sensibly discussed the question of the nude in art from the standpoint of Christian morality. He points out that not only is the nude in art not to be condemned without qualification, and that the nude is by no means necessarily the erotic, but he also adds that even erotic art, in its best and purest manifestations, only arouses emotions that are the legitimate object of man's aspirations. It would be impossible even to represent Biblical stories adequately on canvas or in marble if erotic art were to be tabooed.

It is necessary to correct the impressions received from classic sources by good photographic illustrations on account of the false conventions prevailing in classic works, though those conventions were not necessarily false for the artists who originated them. The omission of the pudendal hair in representations of the nude was, for instance, quite natural, for the people of countries still under Oriental influence are accustomed to remove the hair from the body. If, however, under different conditions, we perpetuate that artistic convention to-day, we put ourselves into a perverse relation to nature. There is ample evidence of this. "There is one convention so ancient, so necessary, so universal," wrote thirty years ago a then prominent author, Frederic Harrison, "that its deliberate defiance to-day may arouse the bile of the least squeamish of men and should make women withdraw at once." If boys and girls were brought up at their mother's knees in familiarity with pictures and the reality of beautiful and natural nakedness, it would be impossible for anyone to write such silly and shameful words as these.

There can be no doubt that among ourselves the simple and direct attitude of the child towards nakedness is so early crushed out of him that intelligent education is necessary in order that he may be enabled to discern what is and what is not obscene. To the plough-boy and the country servant-girl all nakedness, including that of Greek statuary, is alike shameful or lustful. "I have a picture of women like that," said a countryman with a grin to my wife, as he pointed to a photograph on the wall of one of Tintoret's most beautiful groups, "smoking cigarettes." And the mass of people in most northern countries have passed little beyond this stage of discernment; in ability to distinguish between the beautiful and the obscene they are still on the level of the plough-boy and the servant-girl.

## CHAPTER III

## SEXUAL EDUCATION AND NAKEDNESS

The Greek Attitude Towards Nakedness—How the Romans Modified that Attitude—The Influence of Christianity—Nakedness in Medieval Times—Evolution of the Horror of Nakedness—Concomitant Change in the Conception of Nakedness—Prudery—The Romantic Movement—Rise of a New Feeling in Regard to Nakedness—The Hygienic Aspect of Nakedness—How Children may be Accustomed to Nakedness—Nakedness not Inimical to Modesty—The Instinct of Physical Pride—The Value of Nakedness in Education—The Æsthetic Value of Nakedness—The Human Body as One of the Prime Tonics of Life—How Nakedness may be Cultivated—The Moral Value of Nakedness.

THE discussion of the value of nakedness in art leads us on to the allied question of nakedness in nature. What is the psychological influence of familiarity with nakedness? How far should children be made familiar with the naked body? This is a question in regard to which different opinions have been held in different ages, and during recent years a remarkable change has begun to come over the minds of practical educationists in regard to it.

In Sparta, in Chios and elsewhere in Greece, women at one time practised gymnastic feats and dances in nakedness, together with the men, or in their presence.[1] Plato, in his *Republic*, approved of such customs and said that the ridicule of those who laughed at them was but "unripe fruit plucked from the tree of knowledge." On many questions Plato's opinions changed, but not on this. In the *Laws*, which are the last outcome of his philosophic reflection in old age, he still advocates (Bk. viii) a similar co-education of the sexes, in part with a view to blunt the over-keen edge of sexual appetite; with the same object, he advocated the association together of youths and girls without constraint, in costumes which offered no concealment to the form.

It is noteworthy that the Romans, a coarser-grained people than the Greeks and in our narrow modern sense more "moral," showed no perception of the moralizing and refining influence of nakedness. Nudity to them was merely a licentious indulgence, to be treated with contempt even when it was enjoyed. It was confined to the stage, and clamoured for by the populace. In the Floralia, especially, the crowd seem to have claimed it as their right that the actors should play naked, probably, it has been thought, as a survival of a folk-ritual. But the Romans, though they were eager to run to the theatre, felt

[1] Thus Athenæus (Bk. xiii, Ch. XX) says: "In the Island of Chios it is a beautiful sight to go to the gymnasia and the race-courses, and to see the young men wrestling naked with the maidens who are also naked."

nothing but disdain for the performers. "Flagitii principium est, nudare inter cives corpora." So thought old Ennius, as reported by Cicero, and that remained the genuine Roman feeling to the last. "Quanta perversitas!" as Tertullian exclaimed. "Artem magnificant, artificem notant" Augustine referred to the same contrast with the Greeks. In this matter the Romans, although they aroused the horror of the Christians, were yet in reality laying the foundation of Christian morality.

Christianity, which found so many of Plato's opinions congenial, would have nothing to do with his view of nakedness and failed to recognize its psychological correctness. The reason was simple, and indeed simple-minded. The Church was passionately eager to fight against what it called "the flesh," and thus fell into the error of confusing the subjective question of sexual desire with the objective spectacle of the naked form. "The flesh" is evil; therefore "the flesh" must be hidden. And they hid it, without understanding that in so doing they had not suppressed the craving for the human form, but, on the contrary, had heightened it by imparting to it the additional fascination of a forbidden mystery.

There ought to be no question regarding the fact that it is the adorned, the partially concealed body, and not the absolutely naked body, which acts as a sexual excitant. "In Madagascar, West Africa, and the Cape," says G. F. Scott Elliot, "I have always found the same rule. Chastity varies inversely as the amount of clothing." It is now indeed generally held that one of the chief primary objects of ornament and clothing was the stimulation of sexual desire, and artists' models are well aware that when they are completely unclothed they are most safe from undesired masculine advances. "A favourite model of mine told me," remarks Dr. Shufeldt, "that it was her practice to disrobe as soon after entering the artist's studio as possible, for, as men are not always responsible for their emotions, she felt that she was far less likely to arouse or excite them when entirely nude than when only semi-draped." This fact is, indeed, quite familiar to artists' models. If the conquest of sexual desire were the first and last consideration of life it would be more reasonable to prohibit clothing than to prohibit nakedness. It is noteworthy that Friederici points out that naked savages never show signs of sexual erection. Also (Friederici states) in Haiti, New Grenada, and other regions where the ordinary population went about naked, the prostitutes were clothed, while in more civilized Europe the veil has sometimes been the mark of the prostitute.

When Christianity absorbed the whole of the European world this strict avoidance of even the sight of "the flesh," although nominally accepted by all as the desirable ideal, could only be carried out, thoroughly and completely, in the cloister. In the practice of the

world outside, although the original Christian ideals remained influential, various pagan and primitive traditions in favour of nakedness still persisted, and were, to some extent, allowed to manifest themselves, alike in ordinary custom and on special occasions.

Even during the Christian era the impulse to adopt nudity, often with the feeling that it was an especially sacred practice, still persisted. The Adamites of the second century, who read and prayed naked, and celebrated the sacrament naked, according to the statement quoted by St. Augustine, seem to have caused little scandal so long as they only practised nudity in their sacred ceremonies. The German Brethren of the Free Spirit, in the thirteenth century, combined so much chastity with promiscuous nakedness that orthodox Catholics believed they were assisted by the Devil. The French Picards, at a much later date, insisted on public nakedness, believing that God had sent their leader into the world as a new Adam to re-establish the law of Nature; they were persecuted, and were finally exterminated by the Hussites.

In daily life, however, a considerable degree of nakedness was tolerated during mediæval times. This was notably so in the public baths, frequented by men and women together. Thus Alwin Schultz remarks that the women of the aristocratic classes, though not the men, were often naked in these baths except for a hat and a necklace.

It is sometimes stated that in the mediæval religious plays Adam and Eve were absolutely naked. Chambers doubts this, and thinks they wore flesh-coloured tights, or were, as in a later play of this kind, "apparelled in white leather." It may be so, but the public exposure even of the sexual organs was permitted, and that in aristocratic houses, for John of Salisbury (in a passage quoted by Buckle in his *Commonplace Book*) protests against this custom.

The women of the feminist sixteenth century in France, as R. de Maulde la Clavière remarks, had no scruple in recompensing their adorers by admitting them to their toilette, or even their bath. Late in the century they became still less prudish, and many well-known ladies allowed themselves to be painted naked down to the waist, as we see in the portrait of "Gabrielle d'Estrées au Bain" at Chantilly. Many of these pictures, however, are certainly not real portraits.

Even in the middle of the seventeenth century in England nakedness was not prohibited in public, for Pepys tells us that on July 29, 1667, a Quaker came into Westminster Hall, crying, "Repent! Repent!" being in a state of nakedness, except that he was "very civilly tied about the privities to avoid scandal." (This was doubtless Solomon Eccles, who was accustomed to go about in this costume, both before and after the Restoration. He had been a distinguished musician, and, though eccentric, was apparently not insane.) In the following

century (in 1733) we hear that a man ran naked through the Mall for a wager, and won it with general approval. But the wager indicates that daring was needed to win that approval, and that public nakedness was becoming difficult.

The movement of revolt against nakedness never became completely victorious, however, until the nineteenth century. That century represented the triumph of all the forces that banned public nakedness everywhere and altogether. If, as Pudor insisted, nakedness is aristocratic and the slavery of clothes a plebeian characteristic imposed on the lower classes by an upper class who reserved to themselves the privilege of physical culture, we may perhaps connect this with the outburst of democratic plebeianism which, as Nietzsche pointed out, reached its climax in the nineteenth century. It is in any case certainly interesting to observe that by this time the movement had entirely changed its character. It had become general, but at the same time its foundation had been undermined. It had largely lost its religious and moral character, and instead was regarded as a matter of convention. The nineteenth century man who encountered the spectacle of white limbs flashing in the sunlight no longer felt like the mediæval ascetic that he was risking the salvation of his immortal soul or even courting the depravation of his morals; he merely felt that it was "indecent" or, in extreme cases, "disgusting." That is to say he regarded the matter as simply a question of conventional etiquette, at the worst, of taste, of æsthetics. In thus bringing down his repugnance to nakedness to so low a plane he had indeed rendered it generally acceptable, but at the same time he had deprived it of high sanction. His profound horror of nakedness was out of relation to the frivolous grounds on which he based it.

We must not, however, under-rate the tenacity with which this horror of nakedness was held. Nothing illustrates more vividly the deeply ingrained hatred which the nineteenth century felt of nakedness than the ferocity—there is no other word for it—with which Christian missionaries to savages all over the world, even in the tropics, insisted on their converts adopting the conventional clothing of Northern Europe. Travellers' narratives abound in references to the emphasis placed by missionaries on this change of custom, which was both injurious to the health of the people and degrading to their dignity. It is sufficient to quote one authoritative witness, Lord Stanmore, formerly Governor of Fiji, who read a long paper to the Anglican Missionary Conference in 1894 on the subject of "Undue Introduction of Western Ways." "In the centre of the village," he remarked in quoting a typical case (and referring not to Fiji but to Tonga which, it must be admitted, presents the extreme example of this evil), "is the church, a wooden barn-like building. If the day be Sunday, we shall find the native minister arrayed in a greenish-black swallow-tail

coat, a neckcloth, once white, and a pair of spectacles, which he probably does not need, preaching to a congregation, the male portion of which is dressed in much the same manner as himself, while the women are dizened out in old battered hats or bonnets and shapeless gowns like bathing dresses, or it may be in crinolines of an early type. Chiefs of influence and women of high birth, who in their native dress would look, and do look, the ladies and gentlemen they are, by their Sunday finery are given the appearance of attendants upon Jack-in-the-Green. At the time when I visited the villages I have specially in my eye, it was punishable by fine and imprisonment to wear native clothing, punishable by fine and imprisonment to wear long hair or a garland of flowers; punishable by fine or imprisonment to wrestle or to play at ball."

An obvious result of reducing the feeling about nakedness to an unreasoning but imperative convention is the tendency to prudishness. This, as we know, is a form of pseudo-modesty which, being a convention and not a natural feeling, is capable of unlimited extension. It is by no means confined to modern times or to Christian Europe. The ancient Hebrews were not entirely free from prudishness, and we find in the Old Testament that by a curious euphemism the sexual organs are sometimes referred to as "the feet." The Turks are capable of prudishness. So, indeed, were even the ancient Greeks. "Dion the philosopher tells us," remarks Clement of Alexandria, "that a certain woman, Lysidica, through excess of modesty, bathed in her clothes, and that Philotera, when she was to enter the bath, gradually drew back her tunic as the water covered her naked parts; and then rising by degrees, put it on." Mincing prudes were found among the early Christians, and their ways are graphically described by St. Jerome in one of his letters to Eustochium: "These women," he says, "speak between their teeth or with the edge of the lips, and with a lisping tongue, only half pronouncing their words, because they regard as gross whatever is natural. Such as these," declares Jerome, the scholar in him overcoming the ascetic, "corrupt even language." Whenever a new and artificial "modesty" is imposed upon savages prudery tends to arise. Haddon describes this among the natives of Torres Straits, where even the children now suffer from exaggerated prudishness, though formerly absolutely naked and unashamed.

The nineteenth century, which witnessed the triumph of timidity and prudery in this matter, also produced the first fruitful germ of new conceptions of nakedness. To some extent these were embodied in the great Romantic movement. Rousseau, indeed, had placed no special insistence on nakedness as an element of the return to Nature which he preached so influentially. A new feeling in this matter emerged, however, with characteristic extravagance, in some of the episodes of the Revolution, while in Germany in the pioneering

*Lucinde* of Friedrich Schlegel, a characteristic figure in the Romantic movement, a still unfamiliar conception of the body was set forth in a serious and earnest spirit.

In England, Blake, with his strange and flaming genius, proclaimed a mystical gospel which involved the spiritual glorification of the body and contempt for the civilized worship of clothes (" As to a modern man," he wrote, " stripped from his load of clothing he is like a dead corpse ") ; while, later, in America, Thoreau and Whitman asserted, still more definitely, a not dissimilar message concerning the need of returning to Nature.

We find the importance of the sight of the body—though very narrowly, for the avoidance of fraud in the preliminaries of marriage—set forth as early as the sixteenth century by Sir Thomas More in his *Utopia.* In Utopia, according to More, before marriage a staid and honest matron " showeth the woman, be she maid or widow, naked to the wooer. And likewise, a sage and discreet man exhibiteth the wooer naked to the woman." And he goes on to speak of the folly of those who would not buy a colt before removing saddle and harness, and yet marry a woman without knowing what foul deformity her clothes may cover. Campanella, in *The City of the Sun,* where he represents procreation as carefully carried out on eugenic lines, describes the games of the city as played by both sexes together naked, so that those who were weak or deformed might be known.

The clear conception of what may be called the spiritual value of nakedness—by no means from More's point of view, but as a part of natural hygiene in the widest sense, and as a high and special aspect of the purifying and ennobling function of beauty—is of much later date. It is not clearly expressed until the time of the Romantic movement at the beginning of the nineteenth century. We have it admirably set forth in 1806 in Senancour's *De l'Âmour,* still one of the best books on the morality of love. After remarking that nakedness by no means abolishes modesty, he proceeds to advocate occasional partial or complete nudity. " Let us suppose," he remarks, somewhat in the spirit of Plato, " a country in which at certain general festivals the woman should be absolutely free to be nearly or even quite naked. Swimming, waltzing, walking, those who thought good to do so might remain unclothed in the presence of men. . . . Such nakedness would demand corresponding institutions, strong and simple, and a great respect for those conventions which belong to all times."

From that time onwards references to the value and desirability of nakedness become more and more frequent in all civilized countries, sometimes mingled with sarcastic allusions to the false conventions we have inherited in this matter. Thus Thoreau writes in his journal on June 12th, 1852, as he looks at boys bathing in the river : " As yet we have not man in Nature. What a singular fact for an angel visitant

to this earth to carry back in his note-book, that men were forbidden to expose their bodies under the severest penalties."

Later, Iwan Bloch, in his *Sexual Life of Our Time,* declared: "A natural conception of nakedness: that is the watchword of the future." And Stratz, as befits one who worked strenuously in the cause of human health and beauty, admirably set forth the new view we have now attained in this matter. After pointing out that, in opposition to the pagan world which worshipped naked gods, Christianity developed the idea that nakedness was merely sexual, and therefore immoral, he proceeded: "But over all glimmered on the heavenly heights of the Cross the naked body of our Saviour. Under that protection there has gradually disengaged itself from the confusion of ideas a new transfigured form of nakedness made free after long struggle."

It was not, however, so much on these more spiritual sides, but on the side of hygiene, that the nineteenth century furnished its chief practical contribution to the new attitude towards nakedness.

Lord Monboddo, the Scotch judge, who was a pioneer in regard to many modern ideas, had already in the eighteenth century realized the hygienic value of "air-baths," and he invented that now familiar name. In more than one place in his writings Monboddo argued against clothes as unnatural and undesirable from every point of view, alike for mind and body; though from considerations of decency he would not advocate absolute nakedness, only looser garments. "Lord Monboddo," says also Boswell, in 1777, "told me that he awaked every morning at four, and then for his health got up and walked in his room naked, with the window open, which he called taking *an air bath.*" It is said also, I know not on what authority, that he made his beautiful daughters take an air-bath naked on the terrace every morning. (Another distinguished man of the same century, Benjamin Franklin, used sometimes to work naked in his study on hygienic grounds, and, it is recorded, once affrighted a servant-girl by opening the door in an absent-minded moment, thus unattired.) When nudism was first brought into fashion with much enthusiasm in Germany early in the present century Monboddo was regarded as a pioneer, and in 1913 a Monboddo Bund was established in Berlin, "for the harmonious culture of body and mind." Its aims in their comprehensiveness and elaboration went far beyond Monboddo, whom it does not seem to have known much about, as he was referred to in the first prospectus of the Society as a physician.

Rikli, in the middle of the nineteenth century, seems to have been the apostle of air-baths and sun-baths regarded as a systematic method. He established light-and air-baths at Trieste and elsewhere in Austria. His motto was: "Light, Truth and Freedom are the motive forces towards the highest development of physical and moral health." Man is not a fish, he declared; light and air are the first

conditions of a highly organized life. Solaria for the treatment of a number of different disordered conditions are now commonly established, and most systems of natural therapeutics attach prime importance to light and air, while in medicine generally it is recognized that such influences can by no means be neglected.

Dr. Rollier, of Leysin in Switzerland, acquired a world-wide reputation by his success in the helio-therapeutic cure of tuberculosis, especially in the various affections formerly called strumous. He set forth his results in 1915 in *La Cure du Soleil.* The use of violet rays, natural or artificial, for various diseased conditions has become general, but it is also now recognized that the application of a sun cure must be carried out with precautions and that its uses are limited. In the same year as Rollier's book appeared, Römer in Germany published a paper condemning his countrymen for their indiscriminate resort to sun-baths. In every large town, he stated, were sun and air institutions which were used irrationally and immoderately by persons of every age; to one such institution in Hamburg as many as 18,000 persons going on Sunday in the summer. The tired, flabby and anæmic workers in offices and factories who try to make up for their drawbacks by over-doses of sunshine are liable to become exhausted, irritable, sleepless and unfit for work.

It was in Germany that this return towards nakedness was first ably and thoroughly advocated, notably by Dr. H. Pudor in his *Nackt-Cultur*, and by R. Ungewitter in *Die Nacktheit* (first published in 1905), a book which had a large circulation in many editions. These writers enthusiastically advocated nakedness, not only on hygienic, but on moral and artistic grounds. Pudor insisted more especially that "nakedness, both in gymnastics and in sport, is a method of cure and a method of regeneration"; he advocated co-education in this culture of nakedness. Although he made large claims for nakedness —believing that all the nations which have disregarded these claims have rapidly become decadent—Pudor was less hopeful than Ungewitter of any speedy victory over the prejudices opposed to the culture of nakedness. He considered that the immediate task is education, and that a practical commencement might best be made with the foot which is specially in need of hygiene and exercise. But the movement in favour of nudism—on moral even more than hygienic grounds—developed with great rapidity, especially in Germany (where, however, under Nazi rule it has been checked or modified), with the establishment of a number of practising Nudist Societies, the movement spreading more slowly to England and other countries. Many books have been devoted to the subject. The most comprehensive and informative is still that of Dr. Maurice Parmelee, of New York, author of numerous sociological works: *The New Gymosophy; The Philosophy of Nudity as applied to Modern Life.* It was privately printed in New

York in 1927. It is noteworthy, however, that Dr. Parmelee published his book first in England, in 1929 (under the title of *Nudism in Modern Life*) as he had been privately warned that if published in New York it might be proceeded against as "obscene." Since then nudism, though still liable to interference in practice, has become so well recognized in theory that no book on the subject would shock innocent police officers.

As the matter is to-day viewed by those educationists who are equally alive to sanitary and sexual considerations, the claims of nakedness, so far as concerns the young, are regarded as part alike of physical and moral hygiene. The free contact of the naked body with air and water and light makes for the health of the body; familiarity with the sight of the body abolishes petty pruriencies, trains the sense of beauty, and makes for the health of the soul. This double aspect of the matter has undoubtedly weighed greatly with those teachers who now approve of customs which, a few years ago, would have been hastily dismissed as "indecent." There is still a wide difference of opinion as to the limits to which the practice of nakedness may be carried, and also as to the age when it should begin to be restricted. The fact that the adult generation of to-day grew up under the influence of the old horror of nakedness is an inevitable check on any revolutionary changes in these matters.

In view of the ancient traditions and conventions in the matter of nakedness it is necessary to exercise tact and consideration in the introduction of more enlightened practices, or the cause advocated may be discredited instead of furthered. An English friend, actively interested in sexual hygiene and education, who held a teaching post at the University of Freiburg in Baden, narrated to me an incident I may here repeat. It occurred at the house of a professor, an economist of world-wide reputation, and the principal occasion of the incident was Fraülein E. S., a champion of Nackt-Kultur and naked gymnastics for women, having a circle of pupils whom she trained to the valuation of such physical beauty as they possessed. She was herself thirty years of age and finely developed. "The professor," wrote my friend, "invited half-a-dozen people, including friends of mine, to meet her at dinner, and afterwards she retired to costume herself. Imagine the surprise of the guests (and servants!) when she entered stark naked. Most of them got into the way of it after a little while. But at first there was great confusion. One pharisee—a male—walked out of the room and went home, one lady turned her head away, and all were as uncomfortable as possible. I should myself have been so—not on account of the performer, but of the false position one was in by having the spectacle thrust on one in the presence of people not educated up to it." This happened in 1910, and to-day among people of the same level of culture the reaction would be different. But even to-day, at all events among people of the elder generation,

there are many "not educated up to it." My correspondent commented: "There are always people who do *outré* things for the sake of being *outré*, and so produce a reaction which may throw us back. But something will remain. I can imagine that some day the young lady of the house will entertain the guests in this way as she now does with music. And those least fit to be seen will rush in, as those without a note to their voice now stand up to sing!"

Walter Gerhard, in a thoughtful and sensible paper on the educational question, long ago pointed out that it is the adult who needs education in this matter—as in so many other matters of sexual enlightenment—considerably more than the child. Parents educate their children from the earliest years in prudery, and vainly flatter themselves that they have thereby promoted their modesty and morality. He records his own early life in a tropical land and accustomed to nakedness from the first. "It was not till I came to Germany when nearly twenty that I learnt that the human body is indecent, and that it must not be shown because that 'would arouse bad impulses.' It was not till the human body was entirely withdrawn from my sight and after I was constantly told that there was something improper behind clothes, that I was able to understand this."

It is scarcely necessary to add that the cultivation of nakedness must always be conciliated with respect for the natural instincts of modesty. If the practice of nakedness led the young to experience a diminished reverence for their own or others' personalities the advantages of it would be too dearly bought. This is, in part, a matter of wholesome instinct, in part of wise training. We now know that the absence of clothes has little relation with the absence of modesty, such relation as there is being of the inverse order, for the savage races which go naked are usually more modest than those which wear clothes. The saying quoted by Herodotus in the early Greek world that "A woman takes off her modesty with her shift" was a favourite text of the Christian Fathers. But Plutarch, who was a moralist, had already protested against it at the close of the Greek world: "By no means," he declared, "she who is modest clothes herself with modesty when she lays aside her tunic." "A woman may be naked," as Mrs. Bishop, the traveller, remarked to Dr. Baelz, in Japan, "and yet behave like a lady."

The question is complicated among ourselves because established traditions of rigid concealment have fostered a pruriency which is an offensive insult to naked modesty. In many lands the women who are accustomed to be almost or quite naked in the presence of their own people cover themselves as soon as they become conscious of the lustful inquisitive eyes of Europeans. Stratz refers to the prevalence of this impulse of offended modesty in Japan, and mentions that he himself failed to arouse it simply because he was a physician,

and, moreover, had long lived in another land (Java) where also the custom of nakedness prevails. So long as this unnatural prurience exists a free unqualified nakedness is rendered difficult.

Modesty is not, however, the only natural impulse which has to be considered in relation to the custom of nakedness. It seems probable that in cultivating the practice of nakedness we are not merely carrying out a moral and hygienic prescription but allowing legitimate scope to an instinct which at some periods of life, especially in adolescence, is spontaneous and natural, even, it may be, wholesomely based in the traditions of the race in sexual selection. Rigid conventions make it impossible for us to discover the laws of nature in this matter by stifling them at the outset. It may well be that there is a rhythmic harmony and concordance between impulses of modesty and impulses of ostentation, though we have done our best to disguise the natural law by our stupid and perverse by-laws.

Stanley Hall, who emphasized the importance of nakedness, remarks in his comprehensive work on *Adolescence*, that at puberty we have much reason to assume that in a state of nature there is a certain instinctive pride and ostentation that accompanies the new local development, and quotes the observation of Dr. Seerley that the impulse to conceal the sexual organs is especially marked in young men who are under-developed, but not evident in those who are developed beyond the average. Stanley Hall also referred to the frequency with which not only " virtuous young men, but even women, rather glory in occasions when they can display the beauty of their forms without reserve, not only to themselves and to loved ones, but even to others with proper pretexts."

Many have doubtless noted this tendency, especially in women, and chiefly in those who are conscious of beautiful physical development. Madame Céline Renooz believed that the tendency corresponds to a really deep-rooted instinct in women, little or not at all manifested in men who have consequently sought to impose artificially on women their own masculine conceptions of modesty. Perhaps this was obscurely felt by the German girl (mentioned in Kalbeck's *Life of Brahms*) who said : " One enjoys music twice as much *décolletée*."

It is thus a complete mistake to suppose that it is specially women who need to be protected from the sight of nakedness either in the male sex or in themselves. When a man is arrested for bathing without a costume, it is common for a police officer to appear at the court to give evidence that " some women were fishing near by," or similar statement. The possibility that women may see the offender evidently makes the offence much more heinous. But, as a matter of fact, women have frequent occasion to see the male form, not only as mothers and teachers, but in the occupation of nursing which nearly every woman is occasionally called upon to undertake. Women are

by no means apt to be offended by the sight of naked men. It may even be said that for some strange reason men themselves more often shrink from a naked man. Where their own nakedness is concerned, provided the conditions are favourable, women have always been to the front. This has been so quite apart from nudist movements. Thus Acher, writing in the *American Journal of Psychology* in 1910, reports that girls are quite as enthusiastic as boys about going barefoot, and that of the 350 children up to the age of twelve and later whom he was concerned with nearly two-thirds were girls. They will find all sorts of ways of defeating their parents should they object, and show an almost equal desire to be bareheaded, while many strip off all clothing to run about in the rain. Acher, at that period, invoked atavism as an explanation.

From the point of view with which we are here essentially concerned there are three ways in which the cultivation of nakedness—so far as it is permitted by the slow education of public opinion—tends to exert an influence : (1) It is an important element in the sexual hygiene of the young, introducing a wholesome knowledge and incuriosity into a sphere once given up to prudery and pruriency. (2) The effect of nakedness is beneficial on those of more mature age, also, in so far as it tends to cultivate the sense of beauty and to furnish the tonic and consoling influences of natural vigour and grace. (3) The custom of nakedness, in its inception at all events, has a dynamic psychological influence also on morals, an influence exerted in the substitution of a strenuous and positive morality for a merely negative and timid morality such as formerly ruled in this sphere.

Perhaps there are not many adults who realize the intense and secret absorption of thought in the minds of many boys and some girls concerning the problem of the physical conformation of the other sex, and the time, patience, and intellectual energy which they are willing to expend on the solution of this problem. This is mostly effected in secret, but not seldom the secret impulse manifests itself with a sudden violence which in the blind eyes of the law is reckoned as crime. A German lawyer, Dr. Werthauer, has stated that if there were a due degree of familiarity with the natural organs and functions of the opposite sex, 90 per cent. of the indecent acts of youths with girl children would disappear, for in most cases these are not assaults but merely the innocent, though uncontrollable, outcome of a repressed natural curiosity. It is quite true that not a few children boldly enlist each others' co-operation in the settlement of the question and resolve it to their mutual satisfaction. But even this is not altogether satisfactory, for the end is not attained openly and wholesomely, with a due subordination of the specifically sexual, but with a consciousness of wrong-doing and an exclusive attentiveness to the merely physical facts which tend directly to develop sexual

excitement. When familiarity with the naked body of the other sex is gained openly and with no consciousness of indecorum, in the course of work and of play, in exercise or gymnastics, in running or in bathing, sometimes with parents equally naked, from a child's earliest years, no unwholesome results accompany the knowledge of the essential facts of physical conformation thus naturally acquired. The prurience and prudery which have poisoned sexual life in the past are alike rendered impossible.

Nakedness has, however, a hygienic value, as well as a spiritual significance, far beyond its influences in allaying the natural inquisitiveness of the young or acting as a preventative of morbid emotion. It is an inspiration to adults who have long outgrown any youthful curiosities. The vision of the essential and eternal human form, the nearest thing to us in all the world, with its vigour and its beauty and its grace, is one of the prime tonics of life. " The power of a woman's body," said James Hinton, " is no more bodily than the power of music is a power of atmospheric vibrations." It is more than all the beautiful and stimulating things of the world, than flowers or stars or the sea. History and legend and myth reveal to us the sacred and awful influence of nakedness, for, as Stanley Hall says, nakedness has always been " a talisman of wondrous power with gods and men." How sorely men crave for the spectacle of the human body—even to-day after generations have inculcated the notion that it is an indecorous and even disgusting spectacle—is witnessed by the eagerness with which they seek after the spectacle of even its imperfect and meretricious forms, although these certainly possess a heady and stimulating quality which can never be found in the pathetic simplicity of naked beauty. It was another spectacle when the queens of ancient Madagascar at the annual Fandroon, or feast of the bath, laid aside their royal robes and while their subjects crowded the palace courtyard, descended the marble steps to the bath in complete nakedness. When we make our conventions of clothing rigid we at once spread a feast for lust and deny ourselves one of the prime tonics of life.

" For girls to dance naked," said Hinton, " is the only truly pure form of dancing, and in due time it must therefore come about. This is certain : girls will dance naked and men will be pure enough to gaze on them." It has already been so in Greece, he elsewhere remarks, as it is to-day in Japan (as more recently described by Stratz). It is many years since these prophetic words were written, but Hinton himself would probably have been surprised at the progress which has already been made slowly (for all true progress must be slow) towards this goal. Even on the stage new and more natural traditions are beginning to prevail in Europe. An English actress once regarded as a calumny the statement that she appeared on the stage bare-foot, and brought an action for libel, winning substantial damages. Such

a result to-day seems absurd. The movement in which Isadora Duncan was a pioneer has led to a partial disuse among dancers of the offensive device of tights, and we have long ceased to consider it indecorous to show many parts of the body which it was formerly usual to cover.

My own memories cover the degrees through which solo dancing has progressed in modern times, I was in Paris with Arthur Symons, who was keenly interested in all forms of stage dancing, when Isadora Duncan, at the beginning of her career and still unknown in Europe, first arrived and appeared before a small audience, and Symons's appreciation of her revolutionary performance was perhaps unduly qualified by an impression of the dancer's personal vulgarity. I myself more clearly recall the visit to Paris in June, 1903, of the Spanish dancer, Otero, already long famous (she must have been forty at the time). She was appearing in *Rêves d'Opium* at the Théâtre des Mathurins. It was the most daring approach to nudity ever witnessed on the Parisian stage and much surprise was felt at the absence of any interference by the police. There was, however, nothing in the slightest degree indecorous in the solemn gravity of the performance which, my wife commented at the time, seemed proper for a church. There were, it is true, no tights, and the dancer wore breast-shields and the lower part of the body was sheathed by almost but not completely transparent gauze fastened by a brooch below the pubes. There was never the slightest suggestive hint. We first see a Pierrot lying down, and Otero is revealed as a statue (not specially effective in this phase) which then slowly descends and begins to pose in various movements around and over the Pierrot, all slow and grave, revealing every curve of a body perfectly developed to the point of full maturity, yet not beyond maturity or at any point exuberant. The deepest impression ever made on me, however, by a dancer in this genre belongs to a later period, and I wrote of the experience in the following year in my *Impressions and Comments* under date October 22nd, 1912. The dancer was Bianca Stella, whom I had never heard of ; the place the Teatro Gayarre in Barcelona ; and the date May 6th, 1911. I may here reproduce my impressions of the moment as set down in my notebook : " To-night has been a revelation to me, and my chapter on Nakedness [*i.e.*, the present chapter first published in the previous year] is already out of date. I never thought I should live to see—though I knew it would one day be possible—a perfectly lovely woman dance with noble dignity and grace before an ordinary public (stall one peseta), which offered no indecent reactions or vulgar interjections, entirely naked except for the little triangular shield of spangled silver attached to the pubes. She is a woman of fine and high type, possibly 23 or 25 years of age, with an attractive face, very far from coarse or sensual, tall, slim rather than fat, breasts just the smallest trifle pendant, by no means of Spanish type, might be Bohemian or even

English, rather of the type of Stratz's perfect woman. In her first scene she comes on fully dressed and gradually disrobes, dancing all the time, one delicate garment after another, until only the chemise is left, and she flings herself on the couch ; then she rises and ties on a black mantle which floats behind concealing nothing, and as she does so, removes her chemise, leaving nothing but the little pubic shield fastened by an almost invisible cord, and dances again with beautiful grace though no high technique. She comes on again, this time without the shield but with a dark sash, some three inches wide, round the hips and drawn down to the pubes, with no mantle but in her hands a transparent veil which she uses in the old Greek way and not for concealment. There was no jarring note throughout or any voluptuous suggestion." Later, at an afternoon performance, different from that at night, I was even more impressed by its grace and distinction. "This time it seemed a little in the manner of Isadora Duncan. She came on the stage against the background of a dark curtain, again with her little pubic shield, and this time with a piece of simple white drapery wound round her body. This she later unfolds, dancing as she holds it behind her and finally flings it away, revealing her whole body, faultless, it seemed to me, and I no longer noticed even any slight droop of the breasts." On the following day, setting down further reflections in my note-book, and remarking that such a spectacle is not only genuinely inspiring at the moment, but likely to remain a permanent possession since "it adds to one's feeling of a sanctity in the body and to one's pride in possessing a body which may under some circumstances be so noble and inspiring an influence," I added: "I see now that breast-shields are needless or worse with well-shaped breasts ; I am inclined to think the pubic shield also needless, for has not Nature herself provided a veil of hair ? It is just possible, however—though I am not sure—that the art of the dancer, or any art, demands some such little touch of artifice. And perhaps, too, the psychological impulse of modesty also demands it, and this little shield may, at all events in Europe, be essential to the dancer's dignity and self-respect." But it is not so felt by all dancers. In 1913 a young German dancer, Adorée Villany, appeared at a small Paris theatre, and in the course of her dances was for a few moments absolutely naked, without any so-called "cache-sexe." M. Lépine, the Paris prefect of police of the time, brought against her a charge of "outrage aux mœurs." Thereupon the young and enthusiastic dancer declared that she was a "respectable woman." "When I put off my chemise to come on the stage, let it be well understood that I only do so the better to bare my soul." How the affair ended I do not know. But in the following year the Great War broke out and many of the old social conventions were thereby destroyed. There no longer seems much further progress to make in this matter so far

as the artist is concerned, except only by the finer and more extended education of the public.

It should be added at the same time that, while dancers, in so far as they are genuine artists, are entitled to determine the conditions most favourable to their art, little is thereby gained for the cause of a wholesome general culture of nakedness. Pudor, writing as one of the earliest apostles of nackt-kultur in 1908, energetically protested against stage performances. He pointed out that nakedness, to be wholesome, requires the open air, the meadows, the sunlight, and is a very different matter from nakedness at night, by artificial light, in the presence of spectators who are themselves clothed. The cultivation of a certain amount of mutual nakedness as between the sexes on remote country excursions is far more to be recommended. The formation of societies for the cultivation of nudity and sun-bathing in company, however, though it may once have been desirable and still be to the taste of some people, tends to concentrate an undue amount of attention on what should be an occasional simple accompaniment of life. For most of us, also, it is probable, to discard clothes only seems agreeable, or perhaps only possible, when it is a mark of intimacy, in the family or among special friends. And if one chances to possess as a friend some dancer of distinction who in the twilight on a summer day will on a secluded lawn among the trees to the music of a gramophone go through a dance in the course of which all garments are thrown aside, an experience may be garnered to be a joy in memory for ever. It is an experience which, not so many years ago, could scarcely be enjoyed even in imagination.

There finally remains the moral aspect of nakedness. Although this has been emphasized by many during the past half century it is still unfamiliar to the majority. The human body can never be a little thing. The wise educator may see to it that boys and girls are brought up in a natural and wholesome familiarity with each other, but a certain terror and beauty must always attach to the spectacle of the body, a mixed attraction and repulsion. Because it has this force it naturally calls out the virtue of those who take part in the spectacle, and makes impossible any soft compliance to emotion. Even if we admit that the spectacle of nakedness is a challenge to passion it is still a challenge that calls out the ennobling qualities of self-control. It is but a poor sort of virtue that lies in fleeing into the desert from things that we fear may have in them a temptation. We have to learn that it is even worse to attempt to create a desert around us in the midst of civilization. We cannot dispense with passions if we would ; reason, as Holbach said, is the art of choosing the right passions, and education the art of sowing and cultivating them in human hearts. The spectacle of nakedness has its moral value in teaching us to learn to enjoy what we do not possess, a lesson which

is an essential part of the training for any kind of fine social life. The child has to learn to look at flowers and not pluck them ; the man has to learn to look at a woman's beauty and not desire to possess it. The joyous conquest over that "erotic kleptomania," as Ellen Key well said, reveals the blossoming of a fine civilization. We fancy the conquest is difficult, even impossibly difficult. But it is not so. This impulse, like other human impulses, tends under natural conditions to develop temperately and wholesomely. We artificially press a stupid and brutal hand on it, and it is driven into the two unnatural extremes of repression and license, one extreme as foul as the other.

To those who have been bred under bad conditions, it may indeed seem hopeless to attempt to rise to the level of the Greeks and the other finer tempered peoples of antiquity in realizing the moral, as well as the pedagogic, hygienic, and æsthetic advantages of admitting into life the spectacle of the naked human body. But unless we do we hopelessly fetter ourselves in our march along the road of civilization, we deprive ourselves at once of a source of moral strength and of joyous inspiration. Just as Wesley once asked why the devil should have all the best tunes, so to-day men are beginning to ask why the human body, the most divine melody at its finest moments that creation has yielded, should be allowed to become the perquisite of those who lust for the obscene. And some are, further, convinced that by enlisting it on the side of purity and strength they are raising the most powerful of all bulwarks against the invasion of a vicious conception of life and the consequent degradation of sex. These are considerations which we cannot longer afford to neglect, however great the opposition they arouse among the unthinking.

## CHAPTER IV

# THE VALUATION OF SEXUAL LOVE

The Conception of Sexual Love—The Attitude of Mediæval Asceticism—St. Bernard and St. Odo of Cluny—The Ascetic Insistence on the Proximity of the Sexual and Excretory Centres—Love as a Sacrament of Nature—The Idea of the Impurity of Sex in Primitive Religions Generally—Theories of the Origin of this Idea—The Anti-Ascetic Element in the Bible and Early Christianity—Clement of Alexandria—St. Augustine's Attitude—The Recognition of the Sacredness of the Body by Tertullian, Rufinus, and Athanasius—The Reformation—The Sexual Instinct regarded as Beastly—The Human Sexual Instinct not Animal-like—Lust and Love—The Definition of Love—Love and Names for Love Unknown in Some Parts of the World—Romantic Love of Late Development in the White Race—The Mystery of Sexual Desire—Whether Love is a Delusion—The Spiritual as Well as the Physical Structure of the World in Part Built up on Sexual Love—The Testimony of Men of Intellect to the Supremacy of Love.

It will be seen that the preceding discussion of nakedness has a significance beyond what it appeared to possess at the outset. The hygienic value, physically and mentally, of familiarity with nakedness during the early years of life, however considerable it may be, is not the only value which such familiarity possesses. Beyond its æsthetic value, also, there lies in it a moral value, a source of dynamic energy. And now, taking a still further step, we may say that it has a value in relation to our whole conception of the sexual impulse. Our attitude towards the naked human body is the test of our attitude towards the instinct of sex. If our own and our fellows' bodies seem to us intrinsically shameful or disgusting, nothing will ever really ennoble or purify our conceptions of sexual love. Love craves the flesh, and if the flesh is shameful the lover must be shameful. "Se la cosa amata è vile," as Leonardo da Vinci profoundly said, "l'amante se fa vile." However illogical it may have been, there really was a justification for the old Christian identification of the flesh with the sexual instinct. They stand or fall together; we cannot degrade the one and exalt the other. As our feelings towards nakedness are, so will be our feelings towards love.

"Man is nothing else than fetid sperm, a sack of dung, the food of worms. . . . You have never seen a viler dunghill." Such was the outcome of St. Bernard's cloistered *Meditationes Piissimæ*. Sometimes, indeed, these medieval monks would admit that the skin possessed a certain superficial beauty, but they only made that admission in order to emphasize the hideousness of the body when deprived of this film of loveliness, and strained all their perverse

intellectual acumen, and their ferocious irony, as they eagerly pointed the finger of mockery at every detail of what seemed to them the pitiful figure of man. St. Odo of Cluny—charming saint as he was and a pioneer in his appreciation of the wild beauty of the Alps he had often traversed—was yet an adept in this art of reviling the beauty of the human body. That beauty only lies in the skin, he insists ; if we could see beneath the skin women would arouse nothing but nausea. Their adornments are but blood and mucous and bile. If we refuse to touch dung and phlegm even with a finger-tip, how can we desire to embrace a sack of dung ? The medieval monks of the more contemplative order, indeed, often found here a delectable field of meditation, and the Christian world generally was content to accept their opinions in more or less diluted versions, or at all events never made any definite protest against them.

Even men of science accepted these conceptions and were, indeed, late in beginning to emancipate themselves from such ancient superstitions. R. de Graef in the Preface to his famous treatise on the generative organs of women, *De Mulierum Organis Generatione Inservientibus*, dedicated to Cosmo III de Medici in 1672, considered it necessary to apologize for the subject of his work. Even a century later, Linnæus in his great work, *The System of Nature*, dismissed as " abominable " the exact study of the female genitals, although he admitted the scientific interest of such investigations. And if men of science have found it difficult to attain an objective vision of women we cannot be surprised that medieval and still more ancient conceptions have often been subtly mingled with the views of philosophical and semi-philosophical writers.

We may regard as a special variety of the ascetic view of sex—for the ascetics, as we see, freely but not quite legitimately, based their asceticism largely on æsthetic considerations—that insistence on the proximity of the sexual to the excretory centres which found expression in the early Church in Augustine's depreciatory assertion : " Inter fæces et urinam nascimur," and still persisted among many who by no means always associated it with religious asceticism.[1] " As a result of what ridiculous economy, and of what Mephistophilian irony," asked Tarde, " has Nature imagined that a function so lofty, so worthy of the poetic and philosophical hymns which have celebrated it, only deserved to have its exclusive organ shared with that of the vilest corporal functions ? "

It may, however, be pointed out that this view of the matter, however unconsciously, is itself the outcome of the ascetic depreciation of the body. From a scientific point of view, the metabolic processes of the body from one end to the other, whether regarded chemically

[1] Iwan Bloch showed how the ascetic view of woman's body persisted, for instance, in Schopenhauer and De Sade.

or psychologically, are all interwoven and all of equal dignity. We cannot separate out any particular chemical or biological process and declare: This is vile. Even what we call excrement still stores up the stuff of our lives. Eating has to some persons seemed a disgusting process. But yet it has been possible to say, with Thoreau, that "the gods have really intended that men should feed divinely, as themselves, on their own nectar and ambrosia. . . . I have felt that eating became a sacrament, a method of communion, an ecstatic exercise, and a sitting at the communion table of the world."

The sacraments of Nature are in this way everywhere woven into the texture of men's and women's bodies. Lips good to kiss with are indeed first of all chiefly good to eat and drink with. So accumulated and overlapped have the centres of force become in the long course of development, that the mucous membranes of the natural orifices, through the sensitiveness gained in their own offices, all become agents to thrill the soul in the contact of love; it is idle to discriminate high or low, pure or impure; all alike are sanctioned already by the extreme unction of Nature. The nose receives the breath of life; the vagina receives the water of life. Ultimately the worth and loveliness of life must be measured by the worth and loveliness for us of the instruments of life. The swelling breasts are such divinely gracious insignia of womanhood because of the potential child that hangs at them and sucks; the large curves of the hips are so voluptuous because of the potential child they clasp within them; there can be no division here, we cannot cut the roots from the tree. The supreme function of manhood—the handing on of the lamp of life to future races—is carried on, it is true, by the same instrument that is the daily conduit of the bladder. If it has been said in scorn that we are born between urine and excrement, it may be said, in reverence, that the passage through this channel of birth is a sacrament of Nature's more sacred and significant than men could ever invent.

These relationships have been sometimes perceived and their meaning realized by a sort of mystical intuition. We catch glimpses of such an insight now and again, first among the poets and later among the physicians of the Renaissance. In 1664 Rolfincius, in his *Ordo et Methodus Generationi Partium etc.*, at the outset of the second Part devoted to the sexual organs of women, sets forth what ancient writers have said of the Eleusinian and other mysteries and the devotion and purity demanded of those who approached these sacred rites. It is so also with us, he continues, in the rites of scientific investigation. "We also operate with sacred things. The organs of sex are to be held among sacred things. They who approach these altars must come with devout minds. Let the profane stand without, and the doors be closed." In those days, even for science, faith and intuition were alone possible. It is only of recent years that the

histologist's microscope and the physiological chemist's test-tube have furnished them with a rational basis. It is no longer possible to cut Nature in two and assert that here she is pure and there impure.[1]

It has really, however, been a widespread and almost universal feeling among the ancient and primitive peoples that there is something impure and sinful in the things of sex, so that those who would lead a religious life must avoid sexual relationships; even in India celibacy has commanded respect. As to the original foundation of this notion—which it is unnecessary to discuss more fully here—many theories have been put forward; St. Augustine, in his *De Civitate Dei*, sets forth the ingenious idea that the penis, being liable to spontaneous movements and erections that are not under the control of the will, is a shameful organ and involves the whole sphere of sex in its shame. Westermarck argues that among nearly all peoples there is a feeling against sexual relationship with members of the same family or household, and as sex was thus banished from the sphere of domestic life a notion of its general impurity arose. Northcote points out that from the first it has been necessary to seek concealment for sexual intercourse, because at that moment the couple would be a prey to hostile attacks, and that it was by an easy transition that sex came to be regarded as a thing that ought to be concealed, and, therefore, a sinful thing. (Diderot, in his *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville*, had already referred to this motive for seclusion as "the only natural element in modesty.") Crawley devoted a large part of his suggestive work, *The Mystic Rose*, to showing that, to savage man, sex is a perilous, dangerous, and enfeebling element in life, and, therefore, sinful.

It would, however, be a mistake to think that such men as St. Bernard and St. Odo of Cluny, admirably as they represented the ascetic and even the general Christian views of their own time, are to be regarded as altogether typical exponents of the genuine and primitive Christian view. So far as I have been able to discover, during the first thousand years of Christianity we do not find this concentrated intellectual and emotional ferocity of attack on the body; it only developed at the moment when, with Pope Gregory VII, medieval Christianity reached the climax of its conquest over the souls of European men, in the establishment of the celibacy of the secular clergy, and the growth of the great cloistered communities of monks in severely regulated and secluded orders.[2] Before that the

[1] The above passage, now slightly modified, originally formed an unpublished part of an essay on Walt Whitman in *The New Spirit*, first issued in 1889.

[2] Even in the ninth century, however, when the monastic movement was rapidly developing, there were some who withstood the tendencies of the new ascetics. Thus, in 850, Ratramnus, the monk of Corbie, wrote a treatise (*Liber de eo quod Christus ex Virgine natus est*) to prove that Mary really gave birth to Jesus through her sexual organs, and not, as some high-strung persons were beginning to think could alone be possible, through the more conventionally decent breasts. The sexual organs were sanctified. "Spiritus sanctus . . . et thalamum tanto dignum sponso sanctificavit et portam."

teachers of asceticism were more concerned to exhort to chastity and modesty than to direct a deliberate and systematic attack on the whole body; they concentrated their attention rather on spiritual virtues than on physical imperfections. And if we go back to the Gospels we find little of the medieval ascetic spirit in the reported sayings and doings of Jesus, which may rather indeed be said to reveal, on the whole, notwithstanding their underlying asceticism, a certain tenderness and indulgence to the body, while even Paul, though not tender towards the body, exhorts to reverence towards it as a temple of the Holy Spirit.

We cannot expect to find the Fathers of the Church sympathetic to the spectacle of the naked human body, for their position was based on a revolt against paganism, and paganism had cultivated the body. Nakedness had been more especially associated with the public baths, the gymnasium, and the theatre; in profoundly disapproving of these pagan institutions Christianity discouraged nakedness. The fact that familiarity with nakedness was favourable, rather than opposed, to the chastity to which it attached so much importance, the Church—though indeed at one moment it accepted nakedness in the rite of baptism—was for the most part unable to see. But in their decided preference for the dressed over the naked human body the early Christians frequently hesitated to take the further step of asserting that the body is a focus of impurity and that the physical organs of sex are a device of the devil. On the contrary, indeed, some of the most distinguished of the Fathers, especially those of the Eastern Church who had felt the vivifying breath of Greek thought, occasionally expressed themselves on the subject of Nature, sex, and the body in a spirit which would have won the approval of Goethe or Whitman.

Clement of Alexandria, with all the eccentricities of his over-subtle intellect, was yet the most genuinely Greek of all the Fathers, and it is not surprising that the dying ray of classic light reflected from his mind shed some illumination over this question of sex. He protested, for instance, against that prudery which, as the sun of the classic world set, had begun to overshadow life. "We should not be ashamed to name," he declared, "what God has not been ashamed to create." It was a memorable declaration because, while it accepted the old classic feeling of no shame in the presence of Nature, it put that feeling on a new and religious basis harmonious to Christianity. Throughout, though not always quite consistently, Clement defends the body and the functions of sex against those who treated them with contempt. And as the cause of sex is the cause of women he always strongly asserts the dignity of woman, and also proclaims the holiness of marriage, a state which he sometimes places above that of virginity.

Unfortunately, it must be said, St. Augustine—another North African, but of Roman Carthage and not of Greek Alexandria—

thought that he had a convincing answer to the kind of argument which Clement presented, and so great was the force of his passionate and potent genius that he was able in the end to make his answer prevail. For Augustine sin was hereditary, and sin had its special seat and symbol in the sexual organs ; the fact of sin has modified the original divine act of creation, and we cannot treat sex and its organs as though there had been no inherited sin. Our sexual organs, he declares, have become shameful because, through sin, they are now moved by lust. At the same time Augustine by no means takes up the medieval ascetic position of contemptuous hatred towards the body. Nothing can be further from Odo of Cluny than Augustine's enthusiasm about the body, even about the exquisite harmony of the parts beneath the skin. " I believe it may be concluded," he even says, " that in the creation of the human body beauty was more regarded than necessity. In truth, necessity is a transitory thing, and the time is coming when we shall be able to enjoy one another's beauty without any lust." Even in the sphere of sex he would be willing to admit purity and beauty, apart from the inherited influence of Adam's sin. In Paradise, he says, had Paradise continued, the act of generation would have been as simple and free from shame as the act of the hand in scattering seed on to the earth. " Sexual conjugation would have been under the control of the will without any sexual desire. The semen would be injected into the vagina in as simple a manner as the menstrual fluid is now ejected. There would not have been any words which could be called obscene, but all that might be said of these members would have been as pure as what is said of the other parts of the body." That, however, for Augustine, is what might have been in Paradise where, as he believed, sexual desire had no existence. As things are, he held, we are right to be ashamed, we do well to blush. And it was natural that, as Clement of Alexandria mentions, many heretics should have gone further on this road and believed that while God made man down to the navel, the rest was made by another power ; such heretics have their descendants among us even to-day.

Alike in the Eastern and Western Churches, however, both before and after Augustine, though not so often after, great Fathers and teachers have uttered opinions which recall those of Clement rather than of Augustine. We cannot lay very much weight on the utterances of the extravagant and often contradictory Tertullian, but it is worth noting that, while he declared that woman is the gate of Hell, he also said that we must approach Nature with reverence and not with blushes. " Natura veneranda est, non erubescenda." " No Christian author," Capitaine has indeed said, " has so energetically spoken against the heretical contempt of the body as Tertullian. Soul and body, according to Tertullian, are in the closest association. The

soul is the life-principle of the body, but there is no activity of the soul which is not manifested and conditioned by the flesh." [1] More weight attaches to Rufinus Tyrannius, the friend and fellow-student of St. Jerome, in the fourth century, who wrote a commentary on the Apostles' Creed, which was greatly esteemed by the early and medieval Church, and is indeed still valued even to-day. Here, in answer to those who declared that there was obscenity in the fact of Christ's birth through the sexual organs of a woman, Rufinus replies that God created the sexual organs, and that "it is not Nature but merely human opinion which teaches that these parts are obscene. For the rest, all the parts of the body are made from the same clay, whatever differences there may be in their uses and functions." He looks at the matter, we see, piously indeed, but naturally and simply, like Clement, and not, like Augustine, through the distorting medium of a theological system. Athanasius, in the Eastern Church, spoke in the same sense as Rufinus in the Western Church. A certain monk named Amun had been much grieved by the occurrence of seminal emissions during sleep, and he wrote to Athanasius to inquire if such emissions are a sin. In the letter he wrote in reply, Athanasius seeks to reassure Amun. "All things," he tells him, "are pure to the pure. For what, I ask, dear and pious friend, can there be sinful or naturally impure in excrement? Man is the handwork of God. There is certainly nothing in us that is impure." We feel as we read these utterances that the seeds of prudery and pruriency are already alive in the popular mind, but yet we see also that some of the most distinguished thinkers of the early Christian Church, in striking contrast to the more morbid and narrow-minded medieval ascetics, clearly stood aside from the popular movement. On the whole, they were submerged because Christianity, like Buddhism, had in it from the first a germ that lent itself to ascetic renunciation, and the sexual life is always the first impulse to be sacrificed to the passion for renunciation. But there were other germs also in Christianity, and Luther, who in his own plebeian way asserted the rights of the body, although he broke with medieval asceticism, by no means thereby cast himself off from the traditions of the early Christian Church.

I have thought it worth while to bring forward this evidence, although I am perfectly well aware that the facts of Nature gain no additional support from the authority of the Fathers or even of the Bible. Nature and humanity existed before the Bible and would continue to exist although the Bible should be forgotten. But the attitude of Christianity on this point has so often been unreservedly condemned that it seems as well to point out that as its finest moments,

[1] W. Capitaine, *Die Moral des Clemens von Alexandrien*, pp. 112 *et seq.* Without the body, Tertullian declared, there could be no virginity and no salvation. The soul itself is corporeal. He carries, indeed, his idea of the omnipresence of the body to the absurd.

when it was a young and growing power in the world, the utterances of Christianity were often at one with those of Nature and reason. There are many, it may be added, who find it a matter of consolation that in following the natural and rational path in this matter they are not thereby altogether breaking with the religious traditions of their race.

It is scarcely necessary to remark that when we turn from Christianity to the other great world-religions, we do not usually meet with so ambiguous an attitude towards sex. The Mahommedans were as emphatic in asserting the sanctity of sex as they were in asserting physical cleanliness; they were prepared to carry the functions of sex into the future life, and were never worried, as Luther and so many other Christians have been, concerning the lack of occupation in Heaven. In India, although India is the home of the most extreme forms of religious asceticism, sexual love has been sanctified and divinized to a greater extent than in any other part of the world. "It seems never to have entered into the heads of the Hindu legislators," said Sir William Jones long since, "that anything natural could be offensively obscene, a singularity which pervades all their writings, but is no proof of the depravity of their morals." The sexual act has often had a religious significance in India, and the minutest details of the sexual life and its variations are discussed in Indian erotic treatises in a spirit of gravity, while nowhere else have the anatomical and physiological sexual characters of women been studied with such minute and adoring reverence. "Love in India, both as regards theory and practice," remarks Richard Schmidt, "possesses an importance which it is impossible for us even to conceive."

In Protestant countries the influence of the Reformation, by rehabilitating sex as natural, indirectly tended to substitute in popular feeling towards sex the opprobrium of sinfulness by the opprobrium of animality. Henceforth the sexual impulse must be disguised or adorned to become respectably human. This may be illustrated by a passage in Pepys's *Diary* in the seventeenth century. On the morning after the wedding day it was customary to call up new married couples by music; the absence of this music on one occasion (in 1667) seemed to Pepys "as if they had married like dog and bitch." We no longer insist on the music, but the same feeling still exists in the craving for other disguises and adornments for the sexual impulse. We do not always realize that love brings its own sanctity with it.

Nowadays indeed, whenever the repugnance to the sexual side of life manifests itself, the assertion nearly always made is not so much that it is "sinful" as that it is "beastly." It is regarded as that part of man which most closely allies him to the lower animals. It should scarcely be necessary to point out that this is a mistake. On which-

ever side, indeed, we approach it, the implication that sex in man and animals is identical cannot be borne out. From the point of view of those who accept this identity it would be much more correct to say that men are inferior, rather than on a level with animals, for in animals under natural conditions the sexual instinct is strictly subordinated to reproduction and little susceptible to deviation, so that from the standpoint of those who wish to minimize sex, animals are nearer to the ideal, and such persons must say with Woods Hutchinson: " Take it altogether, our animal ancestors have quite as good reason to be ashamed of us as we of them." But if we look at the matter from a wider biological standpoint of development, our conclusion must be very different.

So far from being animal-like, the human impulses of sex are among the least animal-like acquisitions of man. The human sphere of sex differs from the animal sphere of sex to a singularly great extent.[1] Breathing is an animal function and here we cannot compete with birds; locomotion is an animal function and here we cannot equal quadrupeds; we have made no notable advance in our circulatory, digestive, renal, or hepatic functions. Even as regards vision and hearing, there are many animals that are more keen-sighted than man, and many that are capable of hearing sounds that to him are inaudible. But there are no animals in whom the sexual instinct is so sensitive, so highly developed, so varied in its manifestations, so constantly alert, so capable of irradiating the highest and remotest parts of the organism. The sexual activities of man and woman belong not to that lower part of our nature which degrades us to the level of the " brute," but to the higher part which raises us towards all the finest activities and ideas we are capable of. It is true that it is chiefly in the mouths of a few ignorant and ill-bred women that we find sex referred to as " bestial " or " the animal part of our nature." But since women are the mothers and teachers of the human race, this is a piece of ignorance and ill-breeding which cannot be too swiftly eradicated. " If life and the impulse to live," as Dr. Marjorie Greenbie well says, " are such a shame and disgrace, we might as well go out and hang ourselves from the nearest tree."

There are some who seem to think that they have held the balance evenly, and finally stated the matter, if they admit that sexual love may be either beautiful or disgusting, and that either view is equally normal and legitimate. " Listen in turn," Tarde remarked, " to two men who, one cold, the other ardent, one chaste, the other in love, both equally educated and large-minded, are estimating the same thing:

[1] Even in physical conformation the human sexual organs, when compared to those of the lower animals, show marked differences. As Metschnikoff long since pointed out, " Man differs from the anthropoids much more in his sex organs than in his brain."

one judges as disgusting, odious, revolting, and bestial what the other judges to be delicious, exquisite, ineffable, divine. What, for one, is in Christian phraseology an unforgivable sin is, for the other, the state of true grace. Acts that for one seem a sad and occasional necessity, stains that must be carefully effaced by long intervals of continence, are for the other the golden nails from which all the rest of conduct and existence is suspended, the things that alone give human life its value." Yet we may well doubt whether both these persons are " equally educated and large-minded." The savage feels that sex is perilous, and he is right. But the person who feels that the sexual impulse is bad, or even low and vulgar, is an absurdity in the universe, an anomaly. He is like those persons in our insane asylums who feel that the instinct of nutrition is evil and so proceed to starve themselves. They are alike spiritual outcasts in the universe whose children they are. It is another matter when a man declares that, personally, in his own case, he cherishes an ascetic ideal which leads him to restrain, so far as possible, either or both impulses. The man who is sanely ascetic seeks a discipline which aids the ideal he has personally set before himself. He may still remain theoretically in harmony with the universe to which he belongs. But to pour contempt on the sexual life, to throw the veil of " impurity " over it, is, as Nietzsche declared, the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost of Life.

There are many who seek to conciliate prejudice and reason in their valuation of sex by drawing a sharp distinction between " lust " and " love," rejecting the one and accepting the other. It is quite proper to make such a distinction, but the manner in which it is made will by no means usually bear examination. We have to define what we mean by " lust " and what we mean by " love," and this is not easy if they are regarded as mutually exclusive. It is sometimes said that " lust " must be understood as meaning a reckless indulgence of the sexual impulse without regard to other considerations. So understood, we are quite safe in rejecting it. But that is an entirely arbitrary definition of the word. " Lust " is really an ambiguous term ; it is a good word that has changed its moral values, and therefore we need to define it carefully before we venture to use it. Properly speaking, " lust " is an entirely colourless word,[1] and merely means desire in general and sexual desire in particular ; it corresponds to " hunger " or " thirst " ; to use it in an offensive sense is much the same as though we should assume that the word " hungry " had the offensive meaning of " greedy." The result has been that sensitive

[1] It has, however, become coloured and suspect from an early period in the history of Christianity. St. Augustine (*De Civitate Dei*, lib. xiv, cap XV), while admitting that libido or lust is merely the generic name for all desire, adds that, as specially applied to the sexual appetite, it is justly and properly mixed up with ideas of shame.

minds indignantly reject the term "lust" in connection with love. In the early use of our language, "lust," "lusty," and "lustful" conveyed the sense of wholesome and normal sexual vigour. "Lust" probably remains the best simple English word for sexual desire, and was so accepted by McDougall in his long popular *Social Psychology*. Freud adopted the Latin equivalent of "lust"—*libido*. He left it vague, and gradually extended its sphere to desire generally. But it retained unfortunate connotations which have led to the proposal of substitutes. Thus Hamblin Smith in 1925 suggested *conatus* as more convenient, and (when employed in Spinoza's sense) seeming to express exactly what Freud meant by *libido*.

Love, in the sexual sense, is, summarily considered, a synthesis of lust (in the primitive and uncoloured sense of sexual desire) and friendship. It is incorrect to apply the term "love" in the sexual sense to elementary and uncomplicated sexual desire; it is equally incorrect to apply it to any variety or combination of varieties of friendship. There can be no sexual love without lust; but, on the other hand, until the currents of lust in the organism have been so irradiated as to affect other parts of the psychic organism—at the least the affections and the social feelings—it is not yet sexual love. Lust, the specific sexual impulse, is indeed the primary and essential element in this synthesis, for it alone is adequate to the end of reproduction, not only in animals but in men. But it is not until lust is expanded and irradiated that it develops into the exquisite and enthralling flower of love. We may call to mind what happens among plants: on the one hand we have the lower organisms in which sex is carried on summarily and cryptogramically, never shedding any shower of gorgeous blossoms on the world, and on the other hand the higher plants among which sex has become phanerogamous and expanded enormously into form and colour and fragrance.

While "lust" is, of course, known all over the world, and there are everywhere words to designate it, "love" is not universally known, and in many languages there are no words for "love." The failures to find love are often remarkable and unexpected. We may find it where we least expect it. Sexual desire became idealized (as Sergi and others pointed out) even by some animals, especially birds, for when a bird pines to death for the loss of its mate this cannot be due to the uncomplicated instinct of sex, but must involve the interweaving of that instinct with the other elements of life to a degree which is rare even among the most civilized men. Some savage races seem to have no fundamental notion of love, and (like the American Nahuas) no primary word for it, while, on the other hand, in Quichua, the language of the ancient Peruvians, there are nearly 600 combinations of the verb *munay*, to love. Among some peoples love seems to be confined to the women. Letourneau pointed

out that in various parts of the world women have taken a leading part in creating erotic poetry. It may be mentioned in this connection that suicide from erotic motives among primitive peoples occurs chiefly among women. So it was among the Eskimos, so in Hawaii. Not a few savages possess love-poems, as, for instance, the Suahali (Velten, in his *Prosa und Poesi der Suahali*, devotes a section to love-poems). D. G. Brinton stated that the words for love in American languages reveal four main ways of expressing the conception: (1) inarticulate cries of emotion; (2) assertions of sameness or similarity; (3) assertions of conjunction or union; (4) assertions of a wish, desire, a longing. Brinton adds that "these same notions are those which underlie the majority of the words of love in the great Aryan family of languages." The remarkable fact emerges, however, that the peoples of Aryan tongue were slow in developing their conception of sexual love. The American Mayas must be placed above the peoples of early Aryan culture, in that they possessed a radical word for the joy of love which was in significance purely psychical, referring strictly to a mental state, and neither to similarity nor desire. Even the Greeks were late in developing any ideal of sexual love. This was brought out by E. F. M. Benecke in his *Antimachus of Colophon and the Position of Women in Greek Poetry*, a book which contains some hazardous assertions, but is instructive from the present point of view. The Greek lyric poets wrote practically no love poems at all to women before Anacreon, and his were only written in old age. True love for the Greeks was nearly always homosexual. The Ionian lyric poets of early Greece regarded woman as only an instrument of pleasure and the founder of the family. Theognis compares marriage to cattle-breeding; Alcman, when he wishes to be complimentary to the Spartan girls, speaks of them as his "female boy-friends." Æschylus makes even a father assume that his daughters will misbehave if left to themselves. There is no sexual love in Sophocles, and in Euripides it is only the women who fall in love. Benecke concludes that in Greece sexual love, to a comparatively later period, was looked down on, and held to be unworthy of public discussion and representation.[1] It was in Magna Græcia rather than in Greece itself that men took interest in women, and it was not until the Alexandrian period, and notably in Asclepiades, Benecke maintained, that the love of women was regarded as a matter of life and death. Thereafter the conception of sexual love, in its romantic aspects, appears in European life. With the Celtic story of Tristram, as Gaston Paris remarks, it finally appears in the Christian European world

[1] Not only was love looked down on by the Greeks, it was regarded as a disease with dangerous consequences, so that it could not be treated as an ennobling subject for poetry, and dramatic love scenes were avoided. Iwan Bloch, among others, has touched on this point in his *Die Prostitution*, Vol. I, pp. 228–9. See also his *Ursprung der Syphilis*, Vol. II, 509 *et seq.*

of poetry as the chief point in human life, the great motive force of conduct.

Romantic love failed, however, to penetrate the masses in Europe. In the sixteenth century, or whenever it was that the ballad of "Glasgerion" was written, we see it is assumed that a churl's relation to his mistress is confined to the mere act of sexual intercourse; he fails to kiss her on arriving or departing; it is only the knight, the man of upper class, who would think of offering that tender civility. And at the present day in, for instance, the region between East Friesland and the Alps, the word "love" is said to be unknown among the masses, and only its coarse counterpart recognized.

Lucka in his *Drei Stufen der Erotik* (1913), tracing the development of love, regarded it as even more modern, being constituted by the blending of the almost metaphysical idealizing love of the Troubadours which ruled in Dante's time and the Renaissance with the more ancient sensory conception. This blending he regarded as having taken place in the eighteenth century and being specially associated with the Germanic peoples understood in a wide sense. His argument related to men only and did not affect women who were in no need of any such development as they have from the first realized the complete synthesis of the physical with the ideal.

When love is fully developed it becomes an enormously extended, highly complex emotion, and lust, even in the best sense of that word, becomes merely a co-ordinated element among many other elements. Herbert Spencer, in an interesting passage of his *Principles of Psychology* (Part IV, Ch. VIII), analysed love into as many as nine distinct and important elements: (1) the physical impulse of sex; (2) the feeling for beauty; (3) affection; (4) admiration and respect; (5) love of approbation; (6) self-esteem; (7) proprietary feeling; (8) extended liberty of action from the absence of personal barriers; (9) exaltation of the sympathies. "This passion," he concluded, "fuses into one immense aggregate most of the elementary excitations of which we are capable."

The attempt to define love remains always difficult. "Love is as difficult to define as life itself," said Crawley, "and probably for the same reason." He regarded my suggestion of a synthesis of sex emotion with friendship as "a minimum definition," and the extension of the elementary sexual impulse into the complex conjugal affection as "sociologically the most important feature in the natural history of love." For the ancients love was cosmic. For Æschylus it was a law rather than a passion, the divine principle of fecundity and for Sophocles it was the embrace of Heaven and Earth, with the rain that falls down and the corn that springs up; and for Plato also (in the *Timæus*) a heavenly rather than an earthly plant. Recently Dr. Harry Roberts has echoed the antique view by calling love "a cosmic

ultimate," altering, like light rays, whatever it falls on, " the great transforming agency," said Boyce Gibson, or again, " love is the supreme virtue."

It is scarcely necessary to say that to define sexual love, or even to analyse its components, is by no means to explain its mystery. We seek to satisfy our intelligence by means of a coherent picture of love, but the gulf between that picture and the emotional reality must always be incommensurable and impassable. " There is no word more often pronounced than that of love," wrote Bonstetten many years ago, " yet there is no subject more mysterious. Of that which touches us most nearly we know least. We measure the march of the stars and we do not know how we love." And however expert we have become in detecting and analysing the causes, the concomitants, and the results of love, we must still make the same confession to-day. We may attempt to explain love as a form of hunger and thirst, or as a force analogous to electricity, or as a kind of magnetism, or as a variety of chemical affinity, or as a vital tropism, but these explanations are nothing more than ways of expressing to ourselves the magnitude of the phenomenon we are in the presence of.

What has always baffled men in the contemplation of sexual love is the seeming inadequacy of its cause, the immense discrepancy between the necessarily circumscribed region of mucous membrane which is the goal of such love and the sea of world-embracing emotions to which it seems as the door, so that, as Remy de Gourmont has said, " the mucous membranes, by an ineffable mystery, enclose in their obscure folds all the riches of the infinite." It is a mystery before which the thinker and the artist are alike overcome. Donnay, in his play *L'Escalade*, makes a cold and stern man of science, who regards love as a mere mental disorder which can be cured like other disorders, at last fall desperately in love himself. He forces his way into the girl's room, by a ladder, at dead of night, and breaks into a long and passionate speech : " Everything that touches you becomes to me mysterious and sacred. Ah ! to think that a thing so well known as a woman's body, which sculptors have modelled, which poets have sung of, which men of science like myself have dissected, that such a thing should suddenly become an unknown mystery and an infinite joy merely because it is the body of one particular woman—what insanity ! And yet that is what I feel." [1]

[1] Several centuries earlier another French writer, the distinguished physician, A. Laurentius (Des Laurens) in his *Historia Anatomica Humani Corporis* (lib. viii, Quæstio vii) had likewise puzzled over " the incredible desire of coitus," and asked how it was that " that divine animal, full of reason and judgment, which we call Man, should be attracted to those obscene parts of women, soiled with filth, which are placed, like a sewer, in the lowest part of the body." It is noteworthy that, from the first, and equally among men of religion, men of science, and men of letters, the mystery of this problem has peculiarly appealed to the French mind.

That love is a natural insanity, a temporary delusion which the individual is compelled to suffer for the sake of the race, is indeed an explanation that has suggested itself to many who have been baffled by this mystery. "Love, like God, is an illusion," said De Sade.

That, as we know, was the explanation offered by Schopenhauer. When a youth and a girl fall into each other's arms in the ecstacy of love they imagine that they are seeking their own happiness. But it is not so, said Schopenhauer; they are deluded by the genius of the race into the belief that they are seeking a personal end in order that they may be induced to effect a far greater impersonal end: the creation of the future race. The intensity of their passion is not the measure of the personal happiness they will secure but the measure of their aptitude for producing offspring. In accepting passion and renouncing the counsels of cautious prudence the youth and the girl are really sacrificing their chances of selfish happiness and fulfilling the larger ends of Nature. As Schopenhauer saw the matter, there was here no vulgar illusion. The lovers thought that they were reaching towards a boundlessly immense personal happiness; they were probably deceived. But they were deceived not because the reality was less than their imagination, but because it was more; instead of pursuing, as they thought, a merely personal end they were carrying on the creative work of the world, a task better left undone, as Schopenhauer viewed it, but a task whose magnitude he fully recognized.[1]

It must be remembered that, in the lower sense of deception, love may be, and frequently is, a delusion. A man may deceive himself, or be deceived by the object of his attraction, concerning the qualities that she possesses or fails to possess. In first love, occurring in youth, such deception is perhaps entirely normal, and in certain suggestible and inflammable types of people it is peculiarly apt to occur. This kind of deception, although far more frequent and conspicuous in matters of love—and more serious because of the tightness of the marriage bond—is liable to occur in any relation of life. For most people, however, and those not the least sane or the least wise, the memory of the exaltation of love, even when the period of that exaltation is over, still remains as, at the least, the memory of one of the most real and essential facts of life.[2] And perhaps most of us, it

[1] Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, vol. ii, pp. 608 *et seq.*

[2] "Perhaps there is scarcely a man," wrote Malthus, a clergyman as well as one of the profoundest thinkers of his day (*Essay on the Principle of Population*, 1798, Ch. XI), "who has once experienced the genuine delight of virtuous love, however great his intellectual pleasures may have been, that does not look back to the period as the sunny spot in his whole life, where his imagination loves to bask, which he recollects and contemplates with the fondest regrets, and which he would most wish to live over again. The superiority of intellectual to sexual pleasures consists rather in filling up more time, in their having a larger range, and in their being less liable to satiate, than in their being more real and essential."

may be added, must admit in the end, if we are honest with ourselves, that the prizes of love we have gained in the world, whatever their flaws, are far greater than we deserved.

We may well agree that in a certain sense not love alone but all the passions and desires of men are illusions. In that sense the Gospel of Buddha is justified, and we may recognize the inspiration of Shakespeare (in the *Tempest*) and of Calderon (in *La Vida es Sueño*), who felt that ultimately the whole world is an insubstantial dream. But short of that large and ultimate vision we cannot accept illusion ; we cannot admit that love is a delusion in some special and peculiar sense that men's other cravings and aspirations escape. On the contrary, it is the most solid of realities. All the progressive forms of life are built up on the attraction of sex. If we admit the action of sexual selection—as we can scarcely fail to do if we purge it from its unessential accretions—love has moulded the precise shape and colour, the essential beauty, alike of animal and human life.

If we further reflect that, as many investigators believe, not only the physical structure of life but also its spiritual structure—our social feelings, our morality, our religion, our poetry and art—are, in some degree at least, also built up on the impulse of sex, and would have been, if not non-existent, certainly altogether different had other than sexual methods of propagation prevailed in the world, we may easily realize that we can only fall into confusion by dismissing love as a delusion. The whole edifice of life topples down, for as even the idealist Schiller long since said, it is entirely built up on hunger and on love. To look upon love as in any special sense a delusion is merely to fall into the trap of a shallow cynicism. Love is only a delusion in so far as the whole of life is a delusion, and if we accept the fact of life it is unphilosophical to refuse to accept the fact of love.

It may be added that love does not become a delusion by not necessarily being synonymous with happiness. Schopenhauer seems to have thought that love is a sacrifice, made by the lovers to Nature's ends. But love enhances unhappiness as well as happiness, agony as well as joy. This has been clearly put by a modern woman. Said Colette to an interviewer : " I am sometimes asked what, if I had to begin life again, I would choose to leave out or to keep. I would keep everything ! All that I have had I need." " But happiness ? " " Happiness ? I don't know what it is. I can give no meaning to the word. Happiness without unhappiness is not complete. A man I loved much, and made me suffer much, once excused himself for it ! Excused himself ! As if a man should not give a woman the means of being unhappy as well as of being happy ! " And whether for a woman or a man, only to receive happiness is not enough. Love, like life, demands more.

It is unnecessary here to magnify the functions of love in the world ;

it is sufficient to investigate its workings in its own proper sphere. It may, however, be worth while to quote a few expressions of thinkers, belonging to various schools, who have pointed out what seemed to them the far-ranging significance of the sexual emotions for the moral life. "The passions are the heavenly fire which gives life to the moral world," wrote Helvétius long since in *De l'Esprit*. "The activity of the mind depends on the activity of the passions, and it is at the period of the passions, from the age of twenty-five to thirty-five or forty, that men are capable of the greatest efforts of virtue or of genius." When Tourgueneff, the great Russian novelist, was at the end of his life, and felt, as he said, the odour of death around him, he was able to say, as Goncourt records: "I find that nothing supplies that expansion of one's being that love gives." "What touches sex," wrote Zola, "touches the centre of social life." Even our regard for the praise and blame of others has a sexual origin, Professor Thomas argues, and it is love which is the source of susceptibility generally and of the altruistic side of life. "The appearance of sex," Professor Woods Hutchinson attempted to show, "the development of maleness and femaleness, was not only the birth-place of affection, the well-spring of all morality, but an enormous economic advantage to the race and an absolute necessity of progress. In it first we find any conscious longing for or active impulse toward a fellow creature." Most of the arts and sciences were first invented for love's sake, it was said of old. "A factor of enormous potency in the evolution of mind," an authority has declared, its activities being everywhere among the most complex performances of our animal life; they demand "the evolution of activity, enterprise, acuity of sense, prowess in battle, and the higher psychic powers." "Were man robbed of the instinct of procreation, and of all that spiritually springs therefrom," exclaimed Maudsley in his *Physiology of Mind*, "that moment would all poetry, and perhaps also his whole moral sense, be obliterated from his life." So the man of psychiatry. But so also the poet. "In reality the creative life is near to the sexual life, its suffering and its volupty," wrote a true poet, Rilke, in his *Letters to a Young Poet*; "we must regard them as but two forms of one and the same need." So, again, the philosopher. "One seems to oneself transfigured, stronger, richer, more complete; one *is* more complete," said Nietzsche in *Der Wille zur Macht*, "we find here art as an organic function: we find it as the greatest stimulant of life. . . . It is not merely that it changes the feeling of values: the lover *is* worth more, is stronger. In animals this condition produces new weapons, pigments, colours, and forms, above all new movements, new rhythms, a new seductive music. It is not otherwise in man. . . . Even in art the door is opened to him. If we subtract from lyrical work in words and sounds the suggestions of that intestinal fever, what is left over in poetry and

music ? *L'Art pour l'art* perhaps, the quacking virtuosity of cold frogs who perish in their marsh. All the rest is created by love."

It would be easy to multiply citations tending to show how many diverse thinkers have come to the conclusion that sexual love (including therewith parental and especially maternal love) is the source of the chief manifestations of life. How far they are justified in that conclusion, it is not our business now to inquire.

It is undoubtedly true that, as we have seen when discussing the erratic and imperfect distribution of the conception of love, and even of words for love, over the world, by no means all people are equally apt for experiencing, even at any time in their lives, the emotions of sexual exaltation. The difference between the knight and the churl still subsists, and both may sometimes be found in all social strata. Even the refinements of sexual enjoyment, it is unnecessary to insist, quite commonly remain on a merely physical basis, and have little effect on the intellectual and emotional nature.[1] But this is not the case with the people who have most powerfully influenced the course of the world's thought and feeling. The personal reality of love, its importance for the individual life, are facts that have been testified to by some of the greatest thinkers, after lives devoted to intellectual labour. The experience of Renan, who toward the end of his life set down in his remarkable drama, *L'Abbesse de Jouarre*, his conviction that, even from the point of view of chastity, love is, after all, the supreme thing in the world, is far from standing alone. " Love has always appeared as an inferior mode of human music, ambition as the superior mode," wrote Tarde, the distinguished sociologist, at the end of his life. " But will it always be thus ? Are there not reasons for thinking that the future perhaps reserves for us the ineffable surprise of an inversion of that secular order ? " Laplace, half an hour before his death, took up a volume of his own *Mécanique Céleste*, and said : " All that is only trifles, there is nothing true but love." Comte, who had spent his life in building up a Positive Philosophy which should be absolutely real, found (as indeed it may be said the great English Positivist Mill also found) the culmination of all his ideals in a woman, who was, he said, Egeria and Beatrice and Laura in one, and he wrote : " There is nothing real in the world but love. One grows tired of thinking, and even of acting ; one never grows tired of loving, nor of saying so. In the worst tortures of affection I have never ceased to feel that the essential of happiness is that the heart should be worthily filled—even with pain, yes, even with pain, the bitterest pain." And Sophie Kowalewsky, after intellectual

[1] " Perhaps most average men," Forel remarks (*Die Sexuelle Frage*, p. 307), " are but slightly receptive to the intoxication of love ; they are at most on the level of the *gourmet*, which is by no means necessarily an immoral plane, but is certainly not that of poetry."

achievements which have placed her among the most distinguished of her sex, pathetically wrote: "Why can no one love me? I could give more than most women, and yet the most insignificant women are loved and I am not." Love, they all seem to say, is the one thing that is supremely worth while. The greatest and most brilliant of the world's intellectual giants, in their moments of final insight, thus reach the habitual level of the humble and almost anonymous persons, cloistered from the world, who wrote *The Imitation of Christ* or *The Letters of a Portuguese Nun.* And how many others!

## CHAPTER V

# THE FUNCTION OF CHASTITY

Chastity Essential to the Dignity of Love—The Eighteenth Century Revolt Against the Ideal of Chastity—Unnatural Forms of Chastity—The Psychological Basis of Asceticism—Asceticism and Chastity as Savage Virtues—The Significance of Tahiti—Chastity Among Barbarous Peoples—Among the Early Christians—Struggles of the Saints with the Flesh—The Romance of Christian Chastity—Its Decay in Medieval Times—*Aucassin et Nicolette* and the new Romance of Chaste Love—The Unchastity of the Northern Barbarians—The Penitentials—Influence of the Renaissance and the Reformation—The Revolt Against Virginity as a Virtue—The Modern Conception of Chastity as a Virtue—The Influences that Favour Chastity as a Discipline—The Value of Chastity for the Artist—Potency and Impotence in Popular Estimation—The Definitions of Asceticism and Chastity.

THE importance of chastity, and even of asceticism, has never at any time, or in any really vital human society, altogether failed of recognition. Sometimes chastity has been exalted in human estimation, sometimes it has been debased; it has frequently changed the nature of its manifestations; but it has always been there. It is even a part of the vision of all Nature. "The glory of the world is seen only by a chaste mind," said Thoreau with his fine extravagance. "To whomsoever this fact is not an awful but beautiful mystery there are no flowers in Nature." "Down to a relatively late period of history," the distinguished sociologist Durkheim pointed out, "the commerce of the sexes has a religious character." Without chastity it is impossible to maintain the dignity of sexual love. The society in which its estimation sinks to a minimum is in the last stages of degeneration. Chastity has for sexual love an importance which it can never lose, least of all to-day.

It is quite true that during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries many men of high moral and intellectual distinction pronounced very decidedly their condemnation of the ideal of chastity. The great Buffon refused to recognize chastity as an ideal and referred scornfully to "that kind of insanity which has turned a girl's virginity into a thing with a real existence," while William Morris, in his downright manner, once declared at a meeting of the Fellowship of the New Life, that asceticism is "the most disgusting vice that afflicted human nature." Blake, though he seems always to have been a strictly moral man in the conventional sense, felt nothing but contempt for chastity, and sometimes confers a kind of religious solemnity on the idea of unchastity. Shelley, who may have been unwise in sexual matters but can scarcely be called unchaste, also often seems to

associate religion and morality, not with chastity, but with unchastity, and much the same may be said of James Hinton.[1]

But all these men—with others of high character who have pronounced similar opinions—were reacting against false, decayed, and conventional forms of chastity. They were not rebelling against an ideal; they were seeking to set up an ideal in a place where they realized that a mischievous pretence was masquerading as a moral reality. We cannot accept a reasonable ideal of chastity unless we ruthlessly cast aside the unnatural and empty forms of chastity. If chastity is merely a fatiguing effort to emulate in the sexual sphere the exploits of professional fasting men, an effort using up all the energies of the organism and resulting in no achievement greater than the abstinence it involves, then it is surely an unworthy ideal. If it is a feeble submission to an external conventional law which there is no courage to break, then it is not an ideal at all. If it is a rule of morality imposed by one sex on the opposite sex, then it is an injustice and provocative of revolt. If it is an abstinence from the usual forms of sexuality, replaced by more abnormal or more secret forms, then it is simply an unreality based on misconception. And if it is merely an external acceptance of conventions without any further acceptance, even in act, then it is a contemptible farce. These are the forms of chastity which during the past two centuries many fine-souled men have vigorously rejected.

The fact that chastity, or asceticism, is a real virtue, with fine uses, becomes evident when we realize that it has flourished at all times, in connection with all kinds of religions and the most various moral codes. We find it pronounced among savages, and the special virtues of savagery—hardness, endurance, and bravery—are intimately connected with the cultivation of chastity and asceticism. It is true that savages have no ideal of chastity in the degraded modern sense, as a state of permanent abstinence from sexual relationships having a merit of its own apart from any use. They esteem chastity for its values, magical or real, as a method of self-control which contributes towards the attainment of important ends. The ability to bear pain and restraint is nearly always a main element in the initiation of youths at puberty. The custom of refraining from sexual intercourse before expeditions of war and hunting, and other serious concerns involving great muscular and mental strain, whatever the motives assigned, is a sagacious method of economizing energy. The extremely widespread habit of avoiding intercourse during pregnancy and suckling, again, is an admirable precaution in sexual hygiene

[1] For Blake and for Shelley, as well as, it may be added, for Hinton, chastity, as Todhunter remarked in his *Study of Shelley*, is " a type of submission to the actual, a renunciation of the infinite, and is therefore hated by them. The chaste man, *i.e.*, the man of prudence and self-control, is the man who has lost the nakedness of his primitive innocence."

which it is extremely difficult to obtain the observance of in civilization. Savages, also, are perfectly well aware how valuable sexual continence is, in combination with fasting and solitude, to acquire the aptitude for abnormal spiritual powers.

There are fundamental psychological reasons for the wide prevalence of asceticism and for the remarkable manner in which it involves self-mortification, even acute physical suffering. Such pain is an actual psychic stimulant, more especially in slightly neurotic persons. This is well illustrated by a young woman, a patient of Janet's, who suffered from mental depression and was accustomed to find relief by slightly burning her hands and feet. She herself clearly understood the nature of her actions. "I feel," she said, "that I make an effort when I hold my hands on the stove, or when I pour boiling water on my feet; it is a violent act and it awakens me: I feel that it is really done by myself and not by another. . . . To make a mental effort is by itself too difficult for me; I have to supplement it by physical efforts. I have not succeeded in any other way, that is all; when I brace myself up to burn myself I make my mind freer, lighter and more active for several days. Why do you speak of my desire for mortification? My parents believe that, but it is absurd. It would be a mortification if it brought any suffering, but I enjoy this suffering, it gives me back my mind; it prevents my thoughts from stopping; what would one not do to attain such happiness?" If we understand this psychological process we may realize how it is that even in the higher religions, however else they may differ, the practical value of asceticism and mortification as the necessary door to the most exalted religious state is almost universally recognized, and with complete cheerfulness. "Asceticism and ecstacy are inseparable," as Probst-Biraben remarks at the outset of an interesting paper on Mahommedan mysticism. Asceticism is the necessary ante-chamber to spiritual perfection.

It thus happens that savage peoples largely base their often admirable enforcement of asceticism not on the practical grounds that would justify it, but on religious grounds that with the growth of intelligence fall into discredit. Even, however, when the scrupulous observances of savages, whether in sexual or in non-sexual matters, are without any obviously sound basis, it cannot be said that they are entirely useless if they tend to encourage self-control and the sense of reverence.[1]

[1] Thus an old Maori declared, a few years ago, that the decline of his race has been entirely due to the loss of the ancient religious faith in the *tabu*. "For," said he (I quote from an Auckland newspaper), "in the olden-time our *tapu* ramified the whole social system. The head, the hair, spots where apparitions appeared, places which the *tohungas* proclaimed as sacred, we have forgotten and disregarded. Who nowadays thinks of the sacredness of the head? See when the kettle boils, the younger man jumps up, whips the cap off his head, and uses it for a kettle-holder. Who nowadays but looks on with indifference

The would-be intelligent and practical peoples who cast aside primitive observances because they seem baseless or even ridiculous, need a still finer practical sense and still greater intelligence in order to realize that, though the reasons for the observances have been wrong, yet the observances themselves may have been necessary methods of attaining personal and social efficiency. It constantly happens in the course of civilization that we have to revive old observances and furnish them with new reasons.

In considering the moral quality of chastity among savages, we must carefully separate that chastity which among semi-primitive peoples is exclusively imposed upon women. This has no moral quality whatever, for it is not exercised as a useful discipline, but merely enforced in order to heighten the economic and erotic value of the women. Many authorities believe that the regard for women as property furnishes the true reason for the widespread insistence on virginity in brides. Thus A. B. Ellis, speaking of the West Coast of Africa, says that girls of good class are betrothed as mere children, and are carefully guarded from men, while girls of lower class are seldom betrothed, and may lead any life they choose. "In this custom of infant or child betrothals we probably find the key to that curious regard for ante-nuptial chastity found not only among the tribes of the Gold and Slave Coasts, but also among many other uncivilized peoples in different parts of the world." In a very different part of the world, in Northern Siberia, "the Yakuts," Sieroshevski states, "see nothing immoral in illicit love, providing only that nobody suffers material loss by it." Westermarck, in his *History of Human Marriage*, also shows the connection between the high estimate of virginity and the conception of woman as property, and returning to the question in *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, after pointing out that "marriage by purchase has thus raised the standard of female chastity," he refers to the significant fact that the seduction of an unmarried girl "is chiefly, if not exclusively, regarded as an offence against the parents or family of the girl," and there is no indication that it is ever held by savages that any wrong has been done to the woman herself.

It must not be supposed that when, as is usually the case, there is no complete prohibition of extra-nuptial intercourse, mere unrestrained licence prevails. The rule probably is that, as among the tribes at Torres Straits, there is no complete continence before marriage, but neither is there any unbridled license.

when the barber of the village, if he be near the fire, shakes the loose hair off his cloth into it, and the joke and the laughter goes on as if no sacred operation had just been concluded. Food is consumed in places which, in bygone days, it dared not even be carried over."

The example of Tahiti is instructive as regards the prevalence of chastity among peoples of what we generally consider low grades of civilization. Tahiti, according to all who visit it, from the earliest explorers down, is an island possessing high qualities of natural beauty and climatic excellence. " I seemed to be transported into the garden of Eden," said Bougainville in 1768. But, mainly under the influence of the early English missionaries who held ideas of theoretical morality totally alien to those of the inhabitants of the islands, the Tahitians have become the stock example of a population given over to licentiousness and all its awful results. Thus, in his *Polynesian Researches* (second edition, 1832), William Ellis says that the Tahitians practised " the worst pollutions of which it was possible for man to be guilty," though not specifying them. When, however, we carefully examine the narratives of the early visitors to Tahiti, before the population became contaminated by contact with Europeans, it becomes clear that this view needs serious modification. " The great plenty of good and nourishing food," wrote an early explorer, J. R. Forster (*Observations Made on a Voyage Round the World*, 1778), " together with the fine climate, the beauty and unreserved behaviour of their females, invite them powerfully to the enjoyments and pleasures of love. They begin very early to abandon themselves to the most libidinous scenes. Their songs, their dances, and dramatic performances, breathe a spirit of luxury." Yet he is over and over again impelled to set down facts which bear testimony to the virtues of these people. Though rather effeminate in build, they are athletic, he says. Moreover, in their wars they fight with great bravery and valour. They are, for the rest, hospitable. He remarks that they treat their married women with great respect, and that women generally are nearly the equals of men, both in intelligence and in social position. " In short, their character," Forster concludes, " is as amiable as that of any nation that ever came unimproved out of the hands of Nature." It is noteworthy also, that, notwithstanding the high importance which the Tahitians attached to the erotic side of life, they were not deficient in regard for chastity. When Cook, who visited Tahiti many times, was among " this benevolent humane " people, he noted their esteem for chastity, and found that not only were betrothed girls strictly guarded before marriage, but that men also who had refrained from sexual intercourse for some time before marriage were believed to pass at death immediately into the abode of the blessed. Turnbull visited Tahiti at a later period (*A Voyage Round the World in* 1800), but while finding all sorts of vices among them, he is yet compelled to admit their virtues : " They certainly live amongst each other in more harmony than is usual amongst Europeans. During the whole time I was amongst them I never saw such a thing as a battle. . . . I never remember to have seen an

Otaheitean out of temper. With regard to food, it is, I believe, an invariable law in Otaheite that whatever is possessed by one is common to all." Thus we see that even among a people who are commonly referred to as the supreme example of a nation given up to uncontrolled licentiousness, the claims of chastity were admitted, and many other virtues vigorously flourished. The Tahitians were brave, hospitable, self-controlled, courteous, considerate to the needs of others, chivalrous to women, even appreciative of the advantages of sexual restraint, to an extent which has rarely, if ever, been known among those Christian nations which have looked down upon them as abandoned to unspeakable vices.

As we turn from savages towards peoples in the barbarous and civilized stages we find a general tendency for chastity, in so far as it is a common possession of the common people, to be less regarded, or to be retained only as a traditional convention no longer strictly observed. The old grounds for chastity in primitive religions and *tabu* have decayed and no new grounds have been generally established. " Although the progress of civilization," wrote Gibbon long ago, " has undoubtedly contributed to assuage the fiercer passions of human nature, it seems to have been less favourable to the virtue of chastity," and Westermarck concludes that " irregular connections between the sexes have, on the whole, exhibited a tendency to increase along with the progress of civilization."

The main difference in the social function of chastity as we pass from savagery to higher stages of culture seems to be that it ceases to exist as a general hygienic measure or a general ceremonial observance, and, for the most part, becomes confined to special philosophic or religious sects which cultivate it to an extreme degree in a more or less professional way. This state of things is well illustrated by the Roman Empire during the early centuries of the Christian era.[1] Christianity itself was at first one of these sects enamoured of the ideal of chastity ; but by its superior vitality it replaced all the others and finally imposed its ideals, though by no means its primitive practices, on European society generally.

Chastity manifested itself in primitive Christianity in two different though not necessarily opposed ways. On the one hand it took a stern and practical form in vigorous men and women who, after being brought up in a society permitting a high degree of sexual indulgence, suddenly found themselves convinced of the sin of such indulgence. The battle with the society they had been born into, and with their own old impulses and habits, became so severe that they often found

[1] Thus, long before Christian monks arose, the ascetic life of the cloister on very similar lines existed in Egypt in the worship of Serapis (Dill, *Roman Society*, p. 79).

themselves compelled to retire from the world altogether. Thus it was that the parched solitudes of Egypt were peopled with hermits largely occupied with the problem of subduing their own flesh. Their preoccupation, and indeed the preoccupation of much early Christian literature, with sexual matters, may be said to be vastly greater than was the case with the pagan society they had left. Paganism accepted sexual indulgence and was then able to dismiss it, so that in classic literature we find little insistence on sexual details except in writers like Martial, Juvenal, and Petronius who introduce them mainly for satirical ends. But the Christians could not thus escape from the obsession of sex; it was ever with them. We catch interesting glimpses of their struggles, for the most part barren struggles, in the Epistles of St. Jerome, who had himself been an athlete in these ascetic contests.

"Oh, how many times," wrote St. Jerome to Eustochium, the virgin to whom he addressed one of the longest and most interesting of his letters, "when in the desert, in that vast solitude which, burnt up by the heat of the sun, offers but a horrible dwelling to monks, I imagined myself among the delights of Rome! I was alone, for my soul was full of bitterness. My limbs were covered by a wretched sack and my skin was as black as an Ethiopian's. Every day I wept and groaned, and if I was unwillingly overcome by sleep my lean body lay on the bare earth. I say nothing of my food and drink, for in the desert even invalids have no drink but cold water, and cooked food is regarded as a luxury. Well, I, who, out of fear of hell, had condemned myself to this prison, companion of scorpions and wild beasts, often seemed in imagination among bands of girls. My face was pale with fasting and my mind within my frigid body was burning with desire; the fires of lust would still flare up in a body that already seemed to be dead. I remember that more than once I passed the night uttering cries and striking my breast until God sent me peace." "Our century," wrote St. Chrysostom in his *Discourse to Those Who Keep Virgins in Their Houses*, "has seen many men who have bound their bodies with chains, clothed themselves in sacks, retired to the summits of mountains where they have lived in constant vigil and fasting, giving the example of the most austere discipline and forbidding all women to cross the thresholds of their humble dwellings; and yet, in spite of all the severities they have exercised on themselves, it was with difficulty they could repress the fury of their passions." Such experiences rendered the early saints very scrupulous. "They used to say," we are told in Palladius's *Paradise of the Holy Fathers*, belonging to the fourth century, "that Abbâ Isaac went out and found the footprint of a woman on the road, and he thought about it in his mind and destroyed it saying, 'If a brother seeth it he may fall.'" Similarly, according to the rules of St. Cæsarius of Arles for nuns, no

male clothing was to be taken into the convent for the purpose of washing or mending. Even in old age, a certain anxiety about chastity still remained. One of the brothers, we are told in *The Paradise*, said to Abbâ Zeno, " Behold thou hast grown old, how is the matter of fornication ? " The venerable saint replied, " It knocketh, but it passeth on."[1]

As the centuries went by the same strenuous anxiety to guard chastity still remained, and the old struggle constantly reappeared. Some saints, it is true, like Luigi di Gonzaga, were so angelically natured that they never felt the sting of sexual desire. These seem to have been the exception. St. Benedict and St. Francis experienced the difficulty of subduing the flesh. St. Magdalena dei Pazzi, in order to dispel sexual desires, would roll on thorn bushes till the blood came. Some saints kept a special cask of cold water in their cells to stand in. On the other hand, the Blessed Angela de Fulginio tells us in her *Visiones* that, until forbidden by her confessor, she would place hot coals in her secret parts, hoping by material fire to extinguish the fire of concupiscence. St. Aldhelm, the holy Bishop of Sherborne, in the eighth century, also adopted a homeopathic method of treatment, though of a more literal kind, for William of Malmsbury states that when tempted by the flesh he would have women to sit and lie by him until he grew calm again ; the method proved very successful, for the reason, it was thought, that the Devil felt he had been made a fool of. It was only gradually that the ideas and practices of the voluntarily ascetic Christian pioneers became embodied in ecclesiastical ordinances. That was long ago made clear by Lea in his *History of Sacerdotal Celibacy*. The vow of continence was in the very early Church not only voluntary but also binding, on those who assumed it, during their own pleasure. But as time went on, the Popes, and especially Gregory the Great in the sixth century, strongly enjoined it. No vow of chastity was ever imposed in conferring holy orders, though it is implied and known as a *votum adnexum*. At the outset Christianity might be regarded as a liberation for women. But the increasing stringency on continence inevitably acted unfavourably on their ecclesiastical status. For it is woman who, as Anselm put it, is " the torch of Satan." By the middle of the fourth century the triumph of asceticism led the Council of Laodicea to prohibit women from serving and presiding over churches.

As early as the end of the fourth century, Pope Siricius had issued a definitive canon enjoining clerical celibacy which his predecessor, Pope Damasus, had merely advised. The estimate of celibacy went on rising, and when we reach the Council of Trent the evolution was

[1] A recent popular but scholarly book about the early Christian ascetics of the desert is Helen Waddell's *The Desert Fathers* (1936).

finally completed. "The simple rule of discipline," as Lea sums up, was elevated to "the dignity of a point of belief."

In time the Catholic practice and theory of asceticism thus became formalized and elaborated, and its beneficial effects were held to extend beyond the individual himself. "Asceticism from the Christian point of view," wrote Brenier de Montmorand, "is nothing else than all the therapeutic measures making for moral purification. The Christian ascetic is an athlete struggling to transform his corrupt nature and made a road to God through the obstacles due to his passions and the world. He is not working in his own interests alone,. but—by virtue of the reversibility of merit which compensates that of solidarity in error—for the good and for the salvation of the whole of society."

This is the aspect of Christian asceticism most often emphasized. But there is another aspect which may be less familiar, but has been not less important. Primitive Christian chastity was on one side a strenuous discipline. On another side it was a romance, and this indeed was its most specifically Christian side, for athletic asceticism has been associated with the most various religious and philosophic beliefs. If, indeed, it had not possessed the charm of a new sensation, of a delicious freedom, of an unknown adventure, it would never have conquered the European world. There are only a few in that world who have in them the stuff of moral athletes; there are many who respond to the attraction of romance.

The Christians rejected the grosser forms of sexual indulgence, but in doing so they entered with a more delicate ardour into the more refined forms of sexual intimacy. They cultivated a relationship of brother and sister to each other, they kissed one another; at one time, in the spiritual orgy of baptism, they were not ashamed to adopt complete nakedness.[1]

An instructive picture of the forms which chastity assumed among the early Christians is given us in the treatise of Chrysostom *Against Those who Keep Virgins in their Houses*. Our fathers, Chrysostom begins, only knew two forms of sexual intimacy, marriage and fornication. Now a third form has appeared: men introduce young girls into their houses and keep them there permanently, respecting their virginity. "What," Chrysostom asks, "is the reason? It seems to me that life in common with a woman is sweet, even outside conjugal union and fleshly commerce. That is my feeling; and perhaps it is not my feeling alone; it may also be that of these men. They would

[1] At night, in the baptistry, with lamps dimly burning, the women were stripped, even of their tunics, plunged three times in the pool, then anointed, dressed in white, and kissed. Once a church was attacked, when baptism was going on, and the still naked women fled for fear of violence.

not hold their honour so cheap nor give rise to such scandals if this pleasure were not violent and tyrannical. . . . That there should really be a pleasure in this which produces a love more ardent than conjugal union may surprise you at first. But when I give you the proofs you will agree that it is so." The absence of restraint to desire in marriage, he continues, often leads to speedy disgust, and even apart from this, sexual intercourse, pregnancy, delivery, lactation, the bringing up of children, and all the pains and anxieties that accompany these things soon destroy youth and dull the point of pleasure. The virgin is free from these burdens. She retains her vigour and youthfulness, and even at the age of forty may rival the young nubile girl. "A double ardour thus burns in the heart of him who lives with her, and the gratification of desire never extinguishes the bright flame which ever continues to increase in strength." Chrysostom describes minutely all the little cares and attentions which the modern girls of his time required, and which these men delighted to expend on their virginal sweethearts whether in public or in private. He cannot help thinking, however, that the man who lavishes kisses and caresses on a woman whose virginity he retains is putting himself somewhat in the position of Tantalus. But this new refinement of tender chastity, which came as a delicious discovery to the early Christians who had resolutely thrust away the licentiousness of the pagan world, was deeply rooted, as we discover from the frequency with which the grave Fathers of the Church, apprehensive of scandal, felt called upon to reprove it, though their condemnation is sometimes not without a trace of secret sympathy.[1]

There was one form in which the new Christian chastity flourished exuberantly and unchecked: it conquered literature. The most charming, and, we may be sure, the most popular literature of the early Church lay in the innumerable romances of erotic chastity—to some extent, it may well be, founded on fact—which are embodied to-day in the *Acta Sanctorum*. We can see in even the most simple and non-miraculous early Christian records of the martyrdom of women that the writers were fully aware of the delicate charm of the heroine who, like Perpetua at Carthage, tossed by wild cattle in the arena, rises to gather her torn garment around her and to put up her dishevelled hair.[2] It was an easy step to the stories of romantic adventure. Among these delightful stories I may refer especially

[1] Thus Jerome, in his letter to Eustochium, refers to those couples who "share the same room, often even the same bed, and call us suspicious if we draw any conclusions," while Cyprian (*Epistola*, 86) is unable to approve of those men he hears of, one a deacon, who live in familiar intercourse with virgins, even sleeping in the same bed with them, for, he declares, the feminine sex is weak and youth is wanton.

[2] Perpetua (*Acta Sanctorum*, March 7th) is termed by Hort and Mayor, "that fairest flower in the garden of post-Apostolic Christendom." She was not however, a virgin, but a young mother with a baby at her breast.

to the legend of Thekla, which has been placed, incorrectly it may be, as early as the first century, "The Bride and Bridegroom of India," in *Judas Thomas's Acts*, "The Virgin of Antioch" as narrated by St. Ambrose, the history of "Achilleus and Nereus," "Mygdonia and Karish," and "Two Lovers of Auvergne" as told by Gregory of Tours. Early Christian literature abounds in the stories of lovers who had indeed preserved their chastity, and had yet discovered the most exquisite secrets of love.

Thekla's day is the twenty-third of September. There is a very good Syriac version (by Lipsius and others regarded as more primitive than the Greek version) of the *Acts of Paul and Thekla* (see, *e.g.*, Wright's *Apocryphal Acts*). These *Acts* belong to the latter part of the second century. The story is that Thekla, refusing to yield to the passion of the high priest of Syria, was put, naked but for a girdle (*subligaculum*), into the arena on the back of a lioness, which licked her feet and fought for her against the other beasts, dying in her defence. The other beasts, however, did her no harm, and she was finally released. A queen loaded her with money, she modified her dress to look like a man, travelled to meet Paul and lived to old age. Sir W. M. Ramsay has written an interesting study of these *Acts* (*The Church in the Roman Empire*, Ch. XVI; and later in *Athenæum*, November 18th, 1911). He is of opinion that the *Acts* are based on a first-century document, and is able to disentangle many elements of truth from the story. He states that it is the only evidence we possess of the ideas and actions of women during the first century in Asia Minor, where their position was so high and their influence so great. Thekla represents the assertion of woman's rights, and she administered the rite of baptism, though in the existing versions of the *Acts* these features are toned down or eliminated.

Some of the most typical of these early Christian romances are described as Gnostical in origin, with something of the germs of Manichæan dualism which were held in the rich and complex matrix of Gnosticism, while the spirit of these romances is also largely Montanist, with the combined chastity and ardour, the pronounced feminine tone due to its origin in Asia Minor, which marked Montanism. It cannot be denied, however, that they largely passed into the main stream of Christian tradition, and form an essential and important part of that tradition.

We constantly observe in the early documents of this romantic literature of chastity that chastity is insisted on by no means chiefly because of its rewards after death, nor even because the virgin who devotes herself to it secures in Christ an ever-young lover whose golden-haired beauty is sometimes emphasized. Its chief charm is represented as lying in its own joy and freedom and the security it

involves from all the troubles, inconveniences, and bondages of matrimony. This early Christian movement of romantic chastity was clearly, in large measure, a revolt of women against men and marriage. This is well brought out in the instructive story, supposed to be of third century origin, of the eunuchs Achilleus and Nereus, as narrated in the *Acta Sanctorum*, May 12th.

A special department of this literature is concerned with stories of the conversions or the penitence of courtesans. St. Martinianus, for instance (February 13th), was tempted by the courtesan Zoe, but converted her. The story of St. Margaret of Cortona (February 22nd), a penitent courtesan, is late, for she belongs to the thirteenth century. The most delightful document in this literature is probably the latest, the fourteenth-century Italian devotional romance called *The Life of Saint Mary Magdalen*, commonly associated with the name of Frate Domenica Cavalca. (It has been translated into English.) It is the delicately told romance of the chaste and passionate love of the sweet sinner, Mary Magdalene, for her beloved Master.

As time went on the insistence on the joys of chastity in this life became less marked, and chastity is more and more regarded as a state only to be fully rewarded in a future life. Even, however, in Gregory of Tours's charming story of "The Two Lovers of Auvergne," in which this attitude is clear, the pleasures of chaste love in this life are brought out as clearly as in any of the earlier romances. Two senators of Auvergne each had an only child, and they betrothed them to each other. When the wedding day came and the young couple were placed in bed, the bride turned to the wall and wept bitterly. The bridegroom implored her to tell him what was the matter, and, turning towards him, she said that if she were to weep all her days she could never wash away her grief for she had resolved to give her little body immaculate to Christ, untouched by men, and now instead of immortal roses she had only had on her brow faded roses, which deformed rather than adorned it, and instead of the dowry of Paradise which Christ had promised her she had become the consort of a merely mortal man. She deplored her sad fate at considerable length and with much gentle eloquence. At length the bridegroom, overcome by her sweet words, felt that eternal life had shone before him like a great light, and declared that if she wished to abstain from carnal desires he was of the same mind. She was grateful, and with clasped hands they fell asleep. For many years they thus lived together, chastely sharing the same bed. At length she died and was buried, her lover restoring her immaculate to the hands of Christ. Soon afterwards he died also, and was placed in a separate tomb. Then a miracle happened which made manifest the magnitude of this chaste love, for the two bodies were found mysteriously placed

together. To this day, Gregory concludes (writing in the sixth century), the people of the place call them " The Two Lovers."

Although Renan (*Marc-Aurèle*, Ch. XV) briefly called attention to the existence of this copious early Christian literature setting forth the romance of chastity, it seems as yet to have received little or no study. It is, however, of considerable importance, not merely for its own sake, but on account of its psychological significance in making clear the nature of the motive forces which made chastity easy and charming to the people of the early Christian world, even when it involved complete abstinence from sexual intercourse. The early Church anathematized the eroticism of the pagan world, and exorcized it in the most effectual way by setting up a new and more exquisite eroticism of its own.

During the Middle Ages the primitive freshness of Christian chastity began to lose its charm. Men no longer sought daring adventures in the field of chastity. So far as the old ideals survived at all it was in the secular field of chivalry. The last notable figure to emulate the achievements of the early Christians was Robert of Arbrissel in Normandy.

Robert of Arbrissel, who founded, in the eleventh century, the famous and distinguished Order of Fontevrault for women, was a Breton. This Celtic origin is doubtless significant, for it may explain his unfailing ardour and gaiety, and his enthusiastic veneration for womanhood. Even those of his friends who deprecated what they considered his scandalous conduct bear testimony to his unfailing and cheerful temperament, his alertness in action, his readiness for any deed of humanity, and his entire freedom from severity. He attracted immense crowds of people of all conditions, especially women, including prostitutes, and his influence over women was great. Once he went into a brothel to warm his feet, and, incidentally, converted all the women there. " Who are you ? " asked one of them, " I have been here twenty-five years and nobody has ever come here to talk about God." Robert's relation with his nuns at Fontevrault was very intimate, and he would often sleep with them. This is set forth precisely in letters written by friends of his, bishops and abbots, one of whom remarks that Robert had " discovered a new but fruitless form of martyrdom." A royal abbess of Fontevrault in the seventeenth century, pretending that the venerated founder of the order could not possibly have been guilty of such scandalous conduct, and that the letters must therefore be spurious, had the originals destroyed, so far as possible. The Bollandists, in an unscholarly and incomplete account of the matter (*Acta Sanctorum*, February 25th), adopted this view. J. von Walter, however, in a thorough study of Robert of Arbrissel (*Die Ersten Wanderprediger Frankreichs*, Theil I), shows

that there is no reason whatever to doubt the authentic and reliable character of the impugned letters.

The early Christian legends of chastity had, however, their successors. *Aucassin et Nicolette*, which was probably written in Northern France towards the end of the twelfth century, is above all the descendant of the stories in the *Acta Sanctorum* and elsewhere. It embodied their spirit and carried it forward, uniting their delicate feeling for chastity and purity with the ideal of monogamic love. *Aucassin et Nicolette* was the death-knell of the primitive Christian romance of chastity. It was the discovery that the chaste refinements of delicacy and devotion were possible within the strictly normal sphere of sexual love.

There were at least two causes which tended to extinguish the primitive Christian attraction to chastity, even apart from the influence of the Church in repressing its romantic manifestations. In the first place, the submergence of the old pagan world, with its practice and, to some extent, ideal of sexual indulgence, removed the foil which had given grace and delicacy to the tender freedom of the young Christians. In the second place, the austerities which the early Christians had gladly practised for the sake of their souls' health, were robbed of their charm and spontaneity by being made a formal part of codes of punishment for sin, first in the Penitentials and afterwards at the discretion of confessors. This, it may be added, was rendered the more necessary because the ideal of Christian chastity was no longer largely the possession of refined people who had been rendered immune to Pagan license by being brought up in its midst, and even themselves steeped in it. It was clearly from the first a serious matter for the violent North Africans to maintain the ideal of chastity, and when Christianity spread to Northern Europe it seemed almost a hopeless task to acclimatize its ideals among the wild Germans. Hereafter it became necessary for celibacy to be imposed on the regular clergy by ecclesiastical authority, while voluntary celibacy was only kept alive by a succession of religious enthusiasts perpetually founding new Orders. An asceticism thus enforced could not always be accompanied by the ardent exaltation necessary to maintain it, and in its artificial efforts at self-preservation it frequently fell from its insecure heights to the depths of unrestrained license.[1] This fatality of all hazardous efforts to overpass humanity's normal limits began to be realized after the Middle Ages were over by clear-

[1] The strength of early Christian asceticism lay in its spontaneous and voluntary character. When, in the ninth century, the Carlovingians attempted to enforce monastic and clerical celibacy, the result was a great outburst of unchastity and crime; nunneries became brothels, nuns were frequently guilty of infanticide, monks committed unspeakable abominations, the regular clergy formed incestuous relations with their nearest female relatives (Lea, *History of Sacerdotal Celibacy*, vol. i, pp. 155 *et seq.*).

sighted thinkers. "Qui veut faire l'ange," said Pascal, pungently summing up this view of the matter, "fait la bête." That had often been illustrated in the history of the Church.

The Penitentials began to come into use in the seventh century, and became of wide prevalence and authority during the ninth and tenth centuries. They were bodies of law, partly spiritual and partly secular, and were thrown into the form of catalogues of offences with the exact measure of penance prescribed for each offence. They represented the introduction of social order among untamed barbarians, and were codes of criminal law much more than part of a system of sacramental confession and penance. In France and Spain, where order on a Christian basis already existed, they were little needed. They had their origin in Ireland and England, and especially flourished in Germany; Charlemagne supported them. After 1216 the Lateran Council, under Innocent III, made confession obligatory, and the priestly prerogative of regulating the amount of penance according to circumstances, with greater flexibility than the rigid Penitentials admitted, began to be asserted.

The Renaissance and the rise of Humanism undoubtedly affected the feeling towards asceticism and chastity. On the one hand a new and ancient sanction was found for the disregard of virtues which men began to look upon as merely monkish, and on the other hand the finer spirits affected by the new movement began to realize that chastity might be better cultivated and observed by those who were free to do as they would than by those who were under the compulsion of priestly authority. That is the feeling that prevails in Montaigne, and that is the idea of Rabelais when he made it the only rule of his Abbey of Thelème: "Fay ce que vouldras."

In Protestant countries the ascetic ideal of chastity was still further discredited by the Reformation movement which was in considerable part a revolt against compulsory celibacy. Religion was thus no longer placed on the side of chastity. In the eighteenth century, if not earlier, the authority of Nature also was commonly invoked against chastity. It has thus happened that during the past two centuries serious opinion concerning chastity has only been partially favourable to it. It began to be felt that an unhappy and injurious mistake had been perpetrated by attempting to maintain a lofty ideal which encouraged hypocrisy. "The human race would gain much," as Senancour wrote early in the nineteenth century, in his remarkable book on love, "if virtue were made less laborious. The merit would not be so great, but what is the use of an elevation which can rarely be maintained?"

There can be no doubt that the undue discredit into which the idea of chastity began to fall from the eighteenth century onwards was largely due to the existence of that merely external and conventional

physical chastity which was arbitrarily enforced so far as it could be enforced—and is indeed in some degree still enforced, nominally or really—upon all respectable women outside marriage. The conception of the physical virtue of virginity had degraded the conception of the spiritual virtue of chastity. A mere routine, it was felt, prescribed to a whole sex, whether they would or not, could never possess the beauty and charm of a virtue. At the same time it began to be realized that, as a matter of fact, the state of compulsory virginity is not a state especially favourable to the cultivation of real virtues, but that it is bound up with qualities which are no longer regarded as of high value.[1] Hinton poured contempt on " anatomical chastity, as if some physical relations of things were in themselves pure and others impure." " The whole grace of virginity," wrote another philosopher, Guyau, " is ignorance. Virginity, like certain fruits, can only be preserved by a process of desiccation."

Freud also pointed out the evil of the education for marriage which is given to girls on the basis of this ideal of virginity. The result is that when suddenly permitted to fall in love by the authority of her elders, the girl cannot bring her psychic disposition to bear, and goes into marriage uncertain of her own feelings. She brings nothing but deception to the husband who has set all his desires upon her, and manifests frigidity in her physical relations with him.

As, however, we liberate ourselves from the bondage of a compulsory physical chastity, it becomes possible to rehabilitate chastity as a virtue. At the present day it can no longer be said that there is on the part of thinkers and moralists any active hostility to the idea of chastity; there is, on the contrary, a tendency to recognize the value of chastity. But this recognition has been accompanied by a return to the older and sounder conception of chastity. The preservation of a rigid sexual abstinence, an empty virginity, can only be regarded as a pseudo-chastity. The only positive virtue which Aristotle could have recognized in this field was a temperance involving

1 The basis of this feeling was strengthened when it was shown by scholars that the physical virtue of " virginity " had been masquerading under a false name. To remain a virgin seems to have meant at the first, among peoples of early Aryan culture, by no means to take a vow of chastity, but to refuse to submit to the yoke of patriarchal marriage. The women who preferred to stand outside marriage were " virgins," even though mothers of large families, and Æschylus speaks of the Amazons as " virgins," while in Greek the child of an unmarried girl was always " the virgin's son." The history of Artemis, the most primitive of Greek deities, is instructive from this point of view. She was originally only virginal in the sense that she rejected marriage, being the goddess of a nomadic and matriarchal hunting people, and she was the goddess of childbirth, worshipped with orgiastic dances and phallic emblems. It was by a late transformation that Artemis became the goddess of chastity (Farnell, *Cults of the Greek States*, vol. ii, pp. 442 *et seq.*; Sir W. M. Ramsay, *Cities of Phrygia*, vol. i, p. 96).

restraint of the lower impulses, a wise exercise and not a non-exercise. The best thinkers of the Christian Church adopted the same conception; St. Basil in his important monastic rules laid no weight on self-discipline as an end in itself, but regarded it as an instrument for enabling the spirit to gain power over the flesh. St. Augustine declared that continence is only excellent when practised in the faith of the highest good, and he regarded chastity as "an orderly movement of the soul subordinating lower things to higher things, and specially to be manifested in conjugal relationships"; Aquinas, defining chastity in much the same way, viewed impurity as the enjoyment of sexual pleasure not according to right reason, whether as regards the object or the conditions. But for a time the voices of the great moralists were unheard. The virtue of chastity was swamped in the popular Christian passion for the annihilation of the flesh, and that view was, in the sixteenth century, finally consecrated by the Council of Trent, which formally pronounced an anathema upon anyone who should declare that the state of virginity and celibacy was not better than the state of matrimony. Nowadays the pseudo-chastity that was of value on the simple ground that any kind of continence is of higher spiritual worth than any kind of sexual relationships belongs to the past, except for those who adhere to ancient ascetic creeds. The mystic value of virginity has gone; it seems only to arouse in the modern man's mind the idea of a piquancy craved by the hardened rake; it is men who have themselves long passed the age of innocence who attach so much importance to the innocence of their brides. The conception of life-long continence as an ideal has also gone; at the best it is regarded as a mere matter of personal preference. And the conventional simulation of universal chastity at the bidding of respectability, is coming to be regarded as a hindrance rather than a help to the cultivation of any real chastity.

The chastity that is regarded by the moralist of to-day as a virtue has its worth by no means in its abstinence. It is not, in St. Theresa's words, the virtue of the tortoise which withdraws its limbs under its carapace. It is a virtue because it is a discipline in self-control, because it helps to fortify the character and will, and because it is directly favourable to the cultivation of the most beautiful, exalted, and effective sexual life. So viewed, chastity may be opposed to the demands of debased medieval Catholicism, but it is in harmony with the demands of our civilized life to-day, and by no means at variance with the requirements of Nature.

There is always an analogy between the instinct of reproduction and the instinct of nutrition. In the matter of eating it is the influence of science, of physiology, which has finally put aside an exaggerated asceticism, and made eating "pure." The same process, as James

Hinton well pointed out, has been made possible in the sexual relationships; "science has in its hands the key to purity."[1]

Many influences have, however, worked together to favour an insistence on chastity. There has, in the first place, been an inevitable reaction against the sexual facility which had come to be regarded as natural. Such facility was found to have no moral value, for it tended to relaxation of moral fibre and was unfavourable to the finest sexual satisfaction: It could not even claim to be natural in any broad sense of the word, for, in Nature generally, sexual gratification tends to be rare and difficult. Courtship is arduous and long, the season of love is strictly delimited, pregnancy interrupts sexual relationships. Even among savages, so long as they have been untamed by civilization, virility is usually maintained by a fine asceticism; the endurance of hardship, self-control, and restraint, tempered by rare orgies, constitute a discipline which covers the sexual as well as every other department of savage life. To preserve the same virility in civilized life, it may well be felt, we must deliberately cultivate a virtue which under savage conditions of life is natural.[2]

The influence of Nietzsche, direct and indirect, has been on the side of the virtue of chastity in its modern sense. The command: "Be hard," as Nietzsche used it, was not so much an injunction to an unfeeling indifference towards others as an appeal for a more strenuous attitude towards one's self, the cultivation of a self-control able to gather up and hold in the forces of the soul for expenditure on deliberately accepted ends. "A relative chastity," he wrote, "a fundamental and wise foresight in the face of erotic things, even in thought, is part of a fine reasonableness in life, even in richly endowed and complete natures."[3] In this matter Nietzsche is a typical representative of the modern movement for the restoration of chastity to its proper place as a real and beneficial virtue, and not a mere empty convention. Such a movement could not fail to make itself felt, for all that favours facility and luxurious softness in sexual matters is quickly felt to degrade character as well as to diminish the finest erotic satisfaction. For erotic satisfaction, in its highest planes, is only possible when we have secured for the sexual impulse a high degree of what Colin Scott called "irradiation," that is to say a wide diffusion through the whole of the psychic organism. And that can only

[1] "In eating," said Hinton, "we have achieved the task of combining pleasure with an absence of 'lust.' The problem for man and woman is so to use and possess the sexual passion as to make it the minister to higher things, with no restraint on it but that. It is essentially connected with things of the spiritual order, and would naturally revolve round them. To think of it as merely bodily is a mistake."

[2] I have elsewhere discussed more at length the need in modern civilized life of a natural and sincere asceticism (see *Affirmations*, 1898, "St. Francis and Others.")

[3] *Der Wille zur Macht*, p. 392.

be attained by placing impediments in the way of the swift and direct gratification of sexual desire, by compelling it to increase its force, to take long circuits, to charge the whole organism so highly that the final climax of gratified love is not the trivial detumescence of a petty desire but the immense consummation of a longing in which the whole organism, psychic as well as physical, has its part. " Only the chaste can be really obscene," said Huysmans. And, on a higher plane, only the chaste can really love.

Beyond its functions in building up character, in heightening and ennobling the erotic life, and in subserving the adequate fulfilment of family and social duties, chastity has a more special value for those who cultivate the arts. We may not always be inclined to believe the writers who have declared that their verse alone is wanton, but their lives chaste. It is certainly true, however, that a relationship of this kind tends to occur. The stuff of the sexual life, as Nietzsche says, is the stuff of art; if it is expended in one channel it is lost for the other. The masters of all the more intensely emotional arts have frequently cultivated a high degree of chastity. This is notably the case as regards music; one thinks of Mozart,[1] of Beethoven, of many lesser men. In the case of poets and novelists chastity may usually seem to be less prevalent but it is frequently well-marked, and is not seldom disguised by the resounding reverberations which even the slightest love-episode often exerts on the poetic organism. Goethe's life seems, at a first glance, to be a long series of continuous love-episodes. Yet when we remember that it was the very long life of a man whose vigour remained until the end, that his attachments long and profoundly affected his emotional life and his work, and that with most of the women he has immortalized he never had actual sexual relationships at all, when we realize, moreover, that, throughout, he accomplished an almost inconceivably vast amount of work, we shall probably conclude that sexual indulgence had a much smaller part in Goethe's life than in that of many an average man on whom it leaves no obvious emotional or intellectual trace whatever. Sterne, again, declared that he must always have a Dulcinea dancing in his head, yet the amount of his intimate relations with women appears to have been small. Balzac spent his life toiling at his desk, carrying on during many years a love correspondence with a woman he scarcely ever saw and at the end only spent a few months of married life with. The like experience has befallen many artistic creators. For, in the words of Landor, " absence is the invisible and incorporeal mother of ideal beauty."

[1] At the age of twenty-five, when he had already produced much fine work, Mozart wrote in his letters that he had never touched a woman, though he longed for love and marriage. He could not afford to marry, he would not seduce an innocent girl, a venial relation was repulsive to him.

The case of Balzac, just mentioned, has specially attracted attention.[1] When he spoke of himself as leading an anchorite's life, some imagined it was merely a legend he wished to spread. But if not he must have been very discreet, for he was not known to be mixed up in love-affairs. George Sand remarked that he was full of curiosity about sex, but she considered him very chaste. He was essentially sentimental. "Love is my life, my essence," he wrote at thirty-three to one of his many feminine correspondents. But he always insisted that love and intellectual work are incompatible. "The man of genius," he said, "is frigid. When he tries to lead both lives, the intellectual life and the love-life, the man of genius dies, as Raphael died and Lord Byron." Goncourt also refers in his *Journal* to Balzac's belief that to "restrain" sexual activity is to increase mental force, and elsewhere (May 28th, 1872) suggests that many men of genius have gained power by their "virginity in youth," instancing Guizot and Hugo. He recalls also that Marcus Aurelius expressed thankfulness for having been kept from women until he had reached adult age.

We do well to remember that, while the auto-erotic manifestations through the brain are of infinite variety and importance, the brain and the sexual organs are yet the great rivals in using up bodily energy, and that there is an antagonism between extreme brain vigour and extreme sexual vigour, even although they may sometimes both appear at different periods in the same individual. In this sense there is no paradox in the saying of Ramon Correa that potency is impotence and impotence potency, for a high degree of energy, whether in athletics or in intellect or in sexual activity, is unfavourable to the display of energy in other directions. Every high degree of potency has its related impotencies.

It may be added that we may find a curiously inconsistent proof of the excessive importance attached to sexual function by a society which systematically tries to depreciate sex, in the disgrace which is even still attributed to the lack of "virile" potency. Although civilized life offers immense scope for the activities of sexually impotent persons, the impotent man is made to feel that, while he need not be greatly concerned if he suffers from nervous disturbances of digestion, if he should suffer just as innocently from nervous disturbances of the sexual impulse, it is almost a crime. A striking example of this was shown when it was plausibly suggested that Carlyle's relations with his wife might best be explained by supposing that he suffered from some trouble of sexual potency. At once admirers rushed forward to "defend" Carlyle from this "disgraceful" charge; they were more shocked than if it had been alleged that he was a syphilitic. Yet impotence is, at the most, an infirmity, whether due to some congenital anatomical defect or to a disturbance

[1] For instance, "La Chasteté de Balzac," *Chronique Médicale*, 1899, pp. 311-14.

of nervous balance in the delicate sexual mechanism, such as is apt to occur in men of abnormally sensitive temperament. It is no more disgraceful to suffer from it than from dyspepsia, with which, indeed, it may be associated. Many men of genius and high moral character have been sexually imperfect. This was the case with Cowper (though this significant fact is suppressed by his biographers); Ruskin was divorced for a reason of this kind; and J. S. Mill, it is said, was sexually of little more than infantile development.

In considering the question of chastity we have to understand the precise nature of the importance which properly attaches to the impulse of sex. In the second volume of his *Experiment in Autobiography*, Mr. H. G. Wells wrote: "My impulses were all to get rid of the repressions of sexual love, minimize its importance, and subordinate this stress between men and women as agreeably as possible to the business of mankind." He is referring to his earlier life and doubtless he later modified the view here expressed. It is certainly a complete misstatement of the problem of sex. Viewed biologically, the reproductive function of sex is itself a main "business of mankind." To carry out that business effectively the stress is essential. Another thinker in this field, a scientist of philosophic outlook, Professor Knight Dunlap, has declared, in his discussion of *Old and New Viewpoints in Psychology*, that "actual repression is the only salvation of man if civilization is to continue, and the ability to repress effectively is the greatest asset a human individual can have." Along the same lines the late Dr. J. D. Unwin put forth in 1934 his elaborate work, *Sex and Culture*, in which he argued by appeal to a great number of past societies, uncivilized and civilized, that the amount of civilized energy stored up in a human society is related to the degree it has attained in compulsorily sacrificing the gratification of desires. So that civilization is largely, if not entirely, built up on sexual repression. If the attainment of a higher civilization is, as Wells assumed, the business of mankind, then that attainment is based not, as Wells in the passage quoted asserts, by removing repression but by increasing it.

These contradictions may be harmonized by securing a wider outlook. Repression is necessary, but expression is also necessary. It is not one only of these impulses we need to heighten, but both. We cannot indeed truly heighten one unless we heighten the other. They constitute a rhythm which cannot only move in one direction. Without the intensity of stress thus resulting no work would be effected. All growth, even in the plant, takes place under pressure. The arch of life is built up by the dynamic balance of opposing forces.

Our philosophic thinkers may be ignorant of this fundamental fact and cling absurdly to one side of the arch, failing to realize the vital necessity of the other even for the preservation of that to which

they cling. But mankind has from the first been unconsciously wiser. Everywhere in the human world we find an insistent and even ecstatic emphasis alike on generation and the refusal of generation. The generative forces of Nature are deified and worshipped in orgiastic rituals which arouse genesic activities in the worshippers themselves. Yet at the same time the abstinence from sex is recognized as the portal to higher knowledge and greater holiness, a source alike of purity and strength. The idea of chastity, states Schrader in his *Reallexicon*, seems originally to have meant "sacred," while, it may be added, "celibate," when we trace it back etymologically, means "heavenly." We cannot ignore these wider and deeper aspects of the question we are here concerned with.

Up to this point I have been considering the quality of chastity and the quality of asceticism in their most general sense, and without any attempt at precise differentiation. But if we are to accept these as modern virtues, valid to-day, it is necessary that we should be somewhat more precise in defining them. It seems most convenient, and most strictly accordant also with etymology, if we agree to mean by asceticism or *ascesis*, the athlete quality of self-discipline, controlling, by no means necessarily for indefinitely prolonged periods, the gratification of the sexual impulse. By chastity, which is primarily the quality of purity, and secondarily that of holiness, rather than of abstinence, we may best understand a due proportion between erotic claims and the other claims of life. "Chastity," as Ellen Key well says, "is harmony between body and soul in relation to love." Thus comprehended, asceticism is the virtue of control that leads up to erotic gratification, and chastity is the virtue which exerts its harmonizing influence in the erotic life itself.

It will be seen that asceticism by no means necessarily involves perpetual continence. Properly understood, asceticism is a discipline, a training, which has reference to an end not itself. If it is compulsorily perpetual, whether at the dictates of a religious dogma, or as a mere fetish, it is no longer on a natural basis, and it is no longer moral, for the restraint of a man who has spent his whole life in a prison is of no value for life. If it is to be natural and to be moral, asceticism must have an end outside itself, it must subserve the ends of vital activity, which cannot be subserved by a person who is engaged in a perpetual struggle with his own natural instincts. A man may, indeed, as a matter of taste or preference, live his whole life in sexual abstinence, freely and easily, but in that case he is not an ascetic, and his abstinence is neither a subject for applause nor for criticism.

In the same way chastity, far from involving sexual abstinence, only has its value when it is brought within the erotic sphere. A purity that is ignorance, when the age of childish innocence is once passed, is mere stupidity; it is nearer to vice than to virtue. Nor

is purity consonant with effort and struggle ; in that respect it differs from asceticism. " We conquer the bondage of sex," Rosa Mayreder says, " by acceptance, not by denials, and men can only do this with the help of women." The would-be chastity of cold calculation is equally unbeautiful and unreal, and without any sort of value. " Chastity is a thing of the soul," said Hinton. A true and worthy chastity can only be supported by an ardent ideal, whether, as among the early Christians, this is the erotic ideal of a new romance, or, as among ourselves, a more humanly erotic ideal. " Only erotic idealism," says Ellen Key, " can arouse enthusiasm for chastity." Chastity in a healthily developed person can thus be beautifully exercised only in the actual erotic life ; in part it is the natural instinct of dignity and temperance ; in part it is the art of touching the things of sex with hands that remember their aptness for all the fine ends of life. Upon the doorway of entrance to the inmost sanctuary of love there is thus the same inscription as on the doorway to the Epidaurian Sanctuary of Æsculapius : " None but the pure shall enter here."

It will be seen that the definition of chastity remains somewhat lacking in precision. That is inevitable. We cannot grasp purity tightly, for, like snow, it will merely melt in our hands. " Purity itself forbids too minute a system of rules for the observance of purity," well said Sidgwick in his *Methods of Ethics.* Elsewhere he attempted to answer the question : What sexual relations are essentially impure ? and concluded that no answer is possible. " There appears to be no distinct principle, having any claim to self-evidence, upon which the question can be answered so as to command general assent." Even what is called " Free Love," he adds, " in so far as it is earnestly advocated as a means to a completer harmony of sentiment between men and women, cannot be condemned as impure, for it seems paradoxical to distinguish purity from impurity merely by less rapidity of transition." Moll, from the standpoint of medical psychology, reached the same conclusion as Sidgwick from that of ethics. In a report on the " Value of Chastity for Men," published as an appendix to the third edition (1899) of his *Konträre Sexualempfindung,* the distinguished Berlin physician was a pioneer in discussing this matter with vigorous common sense, insisting that " chaste and unchaste are *relative ideas.*" We must not, he stated, as is so often done, identify " chaste " with " sexually abstinent." He adds that we are not justified in describing all extra-marital sexual intercourse as unchaste, for, if we do so, we shall be compelled to regard nearly all men, and some very estimable women, as unchaste. He rightly insisted that in this matter we must apply the same rule to women as to men, and pointed out that even when it involves what may be technically adultery sexual intercourse is not necessarily unchaste. He takes the case of a girl who, when still mentally

immature, is married to a man with whom she finds it impossible to live and a separation consequently occurs, although a divorce may be impossible to obtain. If she now falls passionately in love with a man her love may be entirely chaste, though it involves what is technically adultery.

In thus understanding asceticism and chastity, and their beneficial functions in life, we see that they occupy a place mid-way between the artificially exaggerated position they once held and that to which they were degraded by the inevitable reaction of total indifference or actual hostility which followed. Asceticism and chastity are not rigid categorical imperatives; they are useful means to desirable ends; they are wise and beautiful arts. They demand our estimation, but not our over-estimation. For in over-estimating them, it is too often forgotten, we over-estimate the sexual instinct. The instinct of sex is indeed extremely important. Yet it has not that all-embracing and super-eminent importance which some, even of those who fight against it, are accustomed to believe. That artificially magnified conception of the sexual impulse is fortified by the artificial emphasis placed upon asceticism. We may learn the real place of the sexual impulse in learning how we may reasonably and naturally view the restraints on that impulse.

## CHAPTER VI

## THE PROBLEM OF SEXUAL ABSTINENCE

The Influence of Tradition—The Theological Conception of Lust—Tendency of these Influences to Degrade Sexual Morality—Their Result in Creating the Problem of Sexual Abstinence—The Protests Against Sexual Abstinence—Sexual Abstinence and Genius—Sexual Abstinence in Women—The Advocates of Sexual Abstinence—Intermediate Attitude—Unsatisfactory Nature of the Whole Discussion—Criticism of the Conception of Sexual Abstinence—Sexual Abstinence as Compared to Abstinence from Food—No Complete Analogy—The Morality of Sexual Abstinence Entirely Negative—Is it the Physician's Duty to Advise Extra-Conjugal Sexual Intercourse ?—The Conclusion Against Such Advice—The Physician as Bound by the Moral Ideas of his Age and as Reformer—Sexual Abstinence and Sexual Hygiene—Alcohol—The Influence of Physical and Mental Exercise—The Inadequacy of Sexual Hygiene in this Field—The Unreal Nature of the Conception of Sexual Abstinence—The Necessity of Replacing it by a More Positive Ideal.

WHEN we look at the matter from a purely abstract or even purely biological point of view, it might seem that in deciding that asceticism and chastity are of high value for the personal life we have said all that is necessary to say. That, however, is far from being the case. We soon realize here, as at every point in the practical application of sexual psychology, that it is not sufficient to determine the abstractly right course along biological lines. We have to harmonize our biological demands with social demands. We are ruled not only by natural instincts but by inherited traditions, that in the far past were solidly based on intelligible grounds, and that even still, by the mere fact of their existence, exert a force which we cannot and ought not to ignore.

In discussing the valuation of the sexual impulse we found that we had good ground for making a very high estimate of love. In discussing chastity and asceticism we found that they also are highly to be valued. And we found that, so far from any contradiction being here involved, love and chastity are intertwined in all their finest developments, and that there is thus a perfect harmony in apparent opposition. But when we come to consider the matter in detail, in its particular personal applications, we find that a new factor asserts itself. We find that our inherited social and religious traditions exert a pressure, all on one side, which makes it impossible to place the relations of love and chastity simply on the basis of biology and reason. We are confronted at the outset by our traditions. On the one side these traditions have weighted the word " lust "—considered as expressing all the manifestations of the sexual impulse

which are outside marriage or which fail to have marriage as their direct and ostentatious end—with deprecatory and sinister meanings. And on the other side these traditions have created the problem of "sexual abstinence," which has nothing to do with either asceticism or chastity as these have been defined in the previous chapter, but merely with the purely negative pressure on the sexual impulse, exerted, independently of the individual's wishes, by his religious and social environment.

The theological conception of "lust" or "libido," as sin, followed logically the early Christian conception of "the flesh" and became inevitable as soon as that conception was firmly established. Not only, indeed, had early Christian ideals a degrading influence on the estimation of sexual desire *per se*, but they tended to depreciate generally the dignity of the sexual relationship. If a man made sexual advances to a woman outside marriage, and thus brought her within the despised circle of "lust," he was injuring her because he was impairing her religious and moral value.[1] The only way he could repair the damage done was by paying her money or by entering into a forced and therefore probably unfortunate marriage with her. That is to say that sexual relationships were, by the ecclesiastical traditions, placed on a pecuniary basis, on the same level as prostitution. By its well-meant intentions to support the theological morality which had developed on an ascetic basis, the Church was thus really undermining even that form of sexual relationship which is sanctified.

Gregory the Great ruled that the seducer of a virgin shall marry her, or, in case of refusal, be severely punished corporally and shut up in a monastery to perform penance. According to other ecclesiastical rules, the seducer of a virgin, though held to no responsibility by the civil forum, was required to marry her, or to find a husband and furnish a dowry for her. Such rules had their good side, and were especially equitable when seduction had been accomplished by deceit. But they largely tended in practice to subordinate all questions of sexual morality to a money question. The reparation to the woman, also, largely became necessary because the ecclesiastical conception of lust caused her value to be depreciated by contact with lust, and the reparation might be said to constitute a part of penance. Aquinas held that lust, in however slight a degree, is a mortal sin, and most of the more influential theologians took a view nearly or quite as rigid. Some, however, held that a certain degree of delectation is possible in these matters without mortal sin, or asserted, for instance, that to

[1] This view was an ambiguous improvement on the view, prevalent, as Westermarck has shown, among primitive peoples, that the sexual act involves indignity to a woman or depreciation of her only in so far as she is the property of another person who is the really injured party.

feel the touch of a soft and warm hand is not mortal sin so long as no sexual feeling is thereby aroused. Others, however, held that such distinctions are impossible, and that all pleasures of this kind are sinful. Tomás Sanchez endeavoured at much length to establish rules for the complicated problems of delectation that thus arose, but he was constrained to admit that no rules are really possible, and that such matters must be left to the judgment of a prudent man. At that point casuistry dissolves and the modern point of view emerges.

Even to-day the influence of the old traditions of the Church still unconsciously survives among us. That is inevitable as regards religious teachers, but is found also in men of science, even in Protestant countries. The result is that quite contradictory dogmas are found side by side, even in the same writer. On the one hand, the manifestations of the sexual impulse are emphatically condemned as both unnecessary and evil; on the other hand, marriage, which is fundamentally (whatever else it may also be) a manifestation of the sexual impulse, receives equally emphatic approval as the only proper and moral form of living. [1] There can be no reasonable doubt whatever that it is to the surviving and pervading influence of the ancient traditional theological conception of *libido* that we must largely attribute the sharp differences of opinions on the question of sexual abstinence and the otherwise unnecessary acrimony with which these opinions have sometimes been stated.

On the one side, we find the emphatic statement that sexual intercourse is necessary and that health cannot be maintained unless the sexual activities are regularly exercised.

"All parts of the body which are developed for a definite use are kept in health, and in the enjoyment of fair growth and of long youth, by the fulfilment of that use, and by their appropriate exercise in the employment to which they are accustomed." In that statement, which occurs in the great Hippocratic treatise "On the Joints," we have the classic expression of the doctrine which in ever varying forms has been taught by all those who have protested against sexual abstinence. When we come down to the sixteenth-century outbreak of Protestantism we find that Luther's revolt against Catholicism was in part a protest against the teaching of sexual abstinence. "He to

1 Nowhere do we find these extravagant and contradictory dogmas so wildly and so absurdly illustrated as among lawyers, and on magisterial and judicial benches when the offence of "Obscenity" arises, for it is in the law that ancient traditions are most deeply rooted. The law recognizes the "sacredness" of marriage and no lawyer would dare to dispute it. The main commonly accepted motive for marriage is the gratification of sexual appetite. "The book deals with what everybody will recognize as an unsavoury subject—gratification of sexual appetite," declared the English Attorney-General in Court not long since. He did not pause to consider how what is "unsavoury" can afford "gratification," nor proceed to argue that no subject is so "unsavoury" as marriage. And the judge not only preserved a grave face but decided in accordance with the Attorney-General's arguments.

whom the gift of continence is not given," he said in his *Table Talk*, "will not become chaste by fasting and vigils. For my own part I was not excessively tormented [though elsewhere he speaks of the great fires of lust by which he had been troubled], but all the same the more I macerated myself the more I burnt." And 300 years later, Bebel, the would-be nineteenth-century Luther of a different Protestantism, took the same attitude towards sexual abstinence, while Hinton the physician and philosopher, living in a land of rigid sexual conventionalism and prudery, and moved by keen sympathy for the sufferings he saw around him, would break into passionate sarcasm when confronted by the doctrine of sexual abstinence. "There are innumerable ills—terrible destructions, madness even, the ruin of lives—for which the embrace of man and woman would be a remedy. No one thinks of questioning it. Terrible evils and a remedy in a delight and joy! And man has chosen so to muddle his life that he must say: 'There, that would be a remedy, but I cannot use it. *I must be virtuous!*'"

The extreme view of the possible evils of sexual abstinence seems to have been part of the Renaissance traditions of medicine stiffened by a certain opposition between religion and science. It was still rigorously stated by Lallemand early in the nineteenth century. Subsequently, the medical statements of the evil results of sexual abstinence became more temperate and measured, though still often pronounced. Ord, fifty years ago, considered that sexual abstinence might produce many minor evils. "Most of us," he wrote, "have, no doubt, been consulted by men, chaste in act, who are tormented by sexual excitement. They tell one stories of long-continued local excitement, followed by intense muscular weariness, or by severe aching pain in the back and legs. In some I have had complaints of swelling and stiffness in the legs, and of pains in the joints, particularly in the knees"; he gives the case of a man who suffered after prolonged abstinence from inflammatory condition of knees and was only cured by marriage. Pearce Gould, it may be added, found that "excessive ungratified sexual desire" is one of the causes of acute orchitis. It is held by many authorities, moreover, that minor mental troubles, of a more or less vague character, as well as neurasthenia and hysteria, are by no means infrequently due to sexual abstinence. Freud, who carefully studied *angstneurosis*, the obsession of anxiety, concluded that it is the result of sexual abstinence. Later, in his *Lectures*, Freud enters a warning against over-estimating the importance of abstinence. "Certainly, it is now widely held, a young man should repress his sexual impulses as long as possible and avoid everything that may artificially act as a sexual stimulant. If, however, he has done so, and still suffers from unsatisfied normal sexual desires, and if he sees no possibility of marriage within a reasonable time, no one should dare

to say that he is committing a sin, if, with mutual understanding, he enters into sexual relations with a woman friend, or forms temporary sexual relationships, provided, that is, that he takes the honourable precaution of begetting no children, unless his partner is entirely willing to become a mother, and he is prepared to accept all the responsibilities of fatherhood." Rohleder and others believe that the bad results of sexual abstinence are never permanent, and also that no anatomically pathological states (such as orchitis) can be thereby produced. But even incomplete and temporary sexual abstinence may produce fairly serious results, and especially neurasthenic disturbances of various kinds, such as nervous irritability, anxiety, depression, disinclination for work; also diurnal emissions and premature ejaculations; all these symptoms may, however, it is believed, be cured when abstinence ceases. There seems no good ground for the fear, sometimes expressed, that sexual abstinence may lead to impotence. When impotence follows abstinence it probably existed before.

Many advocates of sexual abstinence have attached importance to the fact that some men of great genius have apparently been completely continent throughout life. This is certainly true. But this fact can scarcely be invoked as an argument in favour of the advantages of sexual abstinence among the ordinary population. J. F. Scott selected Jesus, Newton, Beethoven, and Kant as "men of vigour and mental acumen who have lived chastely as bachelors." It cannot, however, be said that Dr. Scott was happy in the four figures whom he selected from the whole history of human genius as examples of life-long sexual abstinence. We know little with absolute certainty of Jesus, and even if we reject the diagnosis which Binet-Sanglé (in his *Folie de Jesus*) built up from minute study of the Gospels, there are many reasons why we should refrain from emphasizing the example of his sexual abstinence; Newton, apart from his stupendous genius in a special field, was an incomplete and unsatisfactory human being who ultimately reached a condition very like insanity; Beethoven was a thoroughly morbid and diseased man, who led an intensely unhappy existence; Kant, from first to last, was a feeble valetudinarian. It would probably be difficult to find a healthy normal man who would voluntarily accept the life led by any of these four, even as the price of their fame. The distinguished painter, Adolf von Menzel, stated in his will that he had never touched a woman, but Menzel has been described as physically a "gnome." "I have not obtained the impression," remarks Freud, "that sexual abstinence is helpful to energetic and independent men of action or original thinkers, to courageous liberators or reformers. The sexual conduct of a man is often symbolic of his whole method of reaction in the world. The man who energetically grasps the object of his

sexual desire may be trusted to show a similarly relentless energy in the pursuit of other aims." It should be added that this does not necessarily apply to the artist.

Many, though not all, who deny that prolonged sexual abstinence is harmless, include women in this statement. There are some authorities indeed who believe that, whether or not any conscious sexual desire is present, sexual abstinence is less easily tolerated by women than by men.

Cabanis, in his famous and pioneering work, *Rapports du Physique et du Moral*, said in 1802, that women not only bear sexual excess more easily than men, but sexual privations with more difficulty, and a cautious and experienced observer of a later day, Löwenfeld, while not considering that normal women bear sexual abstinence less easily than men, adds that this is not the case with women of neuropathic disposition, who suffer much more from this cause, and either masturbate when sexual intercourse is impossible or fall into hystero-neurasthenic states. Busch stated a century ago that not only is the working of the sexual functions in the organism stronger in women than in men, but that the bad results of sexual abstinence are more marked in women. Sir Benjamin Brodie said long ago that the evils of continence to women are perhaps greater than those of incontinence, and more recently Nyström, though he thinks that women bear sexual abstinence better than men, agrees with the experienced Erb that a large number of completely chaste women of high character, and possessing distinguished qualities of mind and heart, are more or less disordered through their sexual abstinence; this is specially often the case with women married to impotent men, though it is frequently not until they approach the age of thirty that women definitely realize their sexual needs.

A great many women who are healthy, chaste, and modest, feel at times such powerful sexual desire that they can scarcely resist the temptation to go into the street and solicit the first man they meet. Not a few such women, often of good breeding, do actually offer themselves to men with whom they may have perhaps only the slightest acquaintance. Most men have met with them at some time. When a woman of high moral character and strong passions is subjected for a long period to the perpetual strain of such sexual craving, especially if combined with love for a definite individual, a chain of evil results, physical and moral, may be set up, and distinguished physicians have recorded such cases, which terminated at once in complete recovery as soon as the passion was gratified. Numerous gynæcologists have recorded their belief that sexual excitement is a remedy for various disorders of the sexual system in women, and that abstinence is a cause of such disorders. Matthews Duncan said that sexual excitement is the only remedy for amenorrhœa; "the only emmena-

gogue medicine that I know of," he wrote, " is not to be found in the Pharmacopœia: it is erotic excitement." Anstie, in his work on *Neuralgia*, referred to the beneficial effect of sexual intercourse on dysmenorrhœa, remarking that the necessity of the full natural exercise of the sexual function is shown by the great improvement in such cases after marriage, and especially after childbirth. (It may be remarked that not all authorities find dysmenorrhœa benefited by marriage, and some consider that the disorder is often thereby aggravated). The distinguished gynæcologist, Tilt, at a somewhat earlier date, insisted on the evil results of sexual abstinence in producing ovarian irritation, and perhaps subacute ovaritis, remarking that this was specially pronounced in young widows, and in prostitutes placed in penitentiaries. It is known that uterine fibroids bear a definite relation to organic sexual activity, and that sexual abstinence, more especially the long-continued deprivation of pregnancy, is an important cause of the disease. Balls-Headley, of Victoria, regards unsatisfied sexual desire as a factor in many disorders of the sexual organs in women. " My views," he wrote in a private letter, " are founded on a really special gynæcological practice of twenty years, during which I have myself taken about seven thousand most careful records. The normal woman is sexually well-formed and her sexual feelings require satisfaction in the direction of the production of the next generation, but under the restrictive and now especially abnormal conditions of civilization some women undergo hereditary atrophy, and the uterus and sexual feelings are feeble; in others of good average local development the feeling is in restraint; in others the feelings, as well as the organs, are strong, and if normal use be withheld evils ensue. The problem is: Has a crowd of unassociated diseases fallen as through a sieve on woman, or have these affections almost necessarily ensued from the circumstances of her unnatural environment?" Kisch (in his *Sexual Life of Woman*), while protesting against any exaggerated estimate of the effects of sexual abstinence, considered that in women it may result, not only in numerous local disorders, but also in nervous disturbance, hysteria and even insanity, while in neurasthenic women " regulated sexual intercourse has an actively beneficial effect which is often striking."

It is important to remark that the evil results of sexual abstinence in women, in the opinion of many of those who insist upon their importance, are by no means merely due to unsatisfied sexual desire. They may be pronounced even when the woman herself has not the slightest consciousness of sexual needs. This was clearly pointed out long ago by the sagacious Anstie. In women especially, he remarks, " a certain restless hyperactivity of mind, and perhaps of body also, seems to be the expression of Nature's unconscious resentment of the *neglect of sexual functions*." Such women, Anstie added, have

kept themselves free from masturbation "at the expense of a perpetual and almost fierce activity of mind and muscle." I am reminded of the famous and devout nun who was all her life tormented by her speculative attempts to gratify the desire to know what became of the foreskin of Jesus. There are so many restless women, and not a few men, whose mental activities may be symbolized by the desire to know what became of the foreskin of Jesus.

Anstie may be regarded as a forerunner of Freud, who developed with great subtlety and analytic power the doctrine of the transformation of repressed sexual instinct in women into morbid forms. He considers that the nervosity of to-day is largely due to the injurious action on the sexual life of that repression of natural instincts on which, nevertheless, our civilization is built up. We possess the aptitude, he says, of sublimating and transforming our sexual activities into other activities of a psychically related character, but non-sexual. This process cannot, however, be carried out to an unlimited extent any more than can the conversion of heat into mechanical work in our machines. A certain amount of direct sexual satisfaction is for most organizations indispensable, and the renunciation of this individually varying amount is punished by manifestations which we are compelled to regard as morbid. The process of sublimation, under the influence of civilization, leads both to sexual perversions and to psycho-neuroses. These two conditions are closely related, as Freud views the process of their development; they stand to each other as positive and negative, sexual perversions being the positive pole and psycho-neuroses the negative. It is a terribly serious injustice, Freud remarks, that the civilized standard of sexual life is the same for all persons, because though some, by their oganization, may easily accept it, for others it involves the most difficult psychic sacrifices. The married woman who has experienced the deceptions of marriage has usually no way of relief left but by abandoning her virtue. "The more strenuously she has been educated, and the more completely she has been subjected to the demands of civilization, the more she fears this way of escape, and in the conflict between her desires and her sense of duty, she also seeks refuge—in neurosis. Nothing protects her virtue so surely as disease." Taking a still wider view of the influence of the narrow "civilized" conception of sexual morality on women, Freud finds that it is not limited to the production of neurotic conditions; it affects the whole intellectual aptitude of women. Their education denies them any occupation with sexual problems, although such problems are so full of interest to them, for it inculcates the ancient prejudice that any curiosity in such matters is unwomanly and a proof of wicked inclinations. They are thus terrified from thinking, and knowledge is deprived of worth. The prohibition to think extends, automatically and inevitably,

far beyond the sexual sphere. "I do not believe," Freud concludes, "that there is any opposition between intellectual work and sexual activity such as was supposed by Möbius. I am of opinion that the unquestionable fact of the intellectual inferiority of so many women is due to the inhibition of thought imposed upon them for the purpose of sexual repression." It is only of recent years that this problem has been realized and faced, though solitary thinkers like Hinton had been keenly conscious of its existence.

On the other hand we find medical writers not only asserting with much moral fervour that sexual intercourse outside marriage is always and altogether unnecessary, but declaring, moreover, the harmlessness, or even the advantages, of sexual abstinence.

Ribbing, the Swedish professor, in his *Hygiène Sexuelle,* long ago emphatically advocated sexual abstinence outside marriage, and asserted its harmlessness. Gilles de la Tourette, Féré, and Augagneur in France agreed. In Germany Fürbinger asserted that continence is possible and necessary, though admitting that it may mean serious mischief in exceptional cases. So also Eulenburg and Hegar. Näcke, who frequently discussed the problem of sexual abstinence, maintained that sexual abstinence can, at most, produce rare and slight unfavourable results, and that so far as his own extensive observations were concerned, the patients in asylums suffer scarcely at all from their compulsory sexual abstinence.

It is in England, however, that the virtues of sexual abstinence have been most loudly proclaimed, sometimes with considerable lack of cautious qualification. Acton, in his *Reproductive Organs,* long ago set forth the traditional English view, as well as Beale in his *Morality and the Moral Question.* More distinguished representatives of the same view were Paget and Sir William Gowers. The latter proclaimed the advantages of "unbroken chastity," more especially as a method of avoiding syphilis. "With all the force that any knowledge I possess, and any authority I have, can give, I assert that no man ever yet was in the slightest degree or way the worse for continence or better for incontinence. From the latter all are worse morally; a clear majority are worse physically; and in no small number the result is, and ever will be, utter physical shipwreck on one of the many rocks, sharp, jagged-edged, which beset the way, or on one of the many beds of festering slime which no care can possibly avoid." In America the same view widely prevailed. These writers of an older generation assumed that the "incontinence" they condemned meant intercourse with prostitutes and risk of syphilitic infection; and on this ground their attitude was reasonable.

Among medical authorities who have discussed the question of sexual abstinence at length it is not now, indeed, usually possible to find unqualified opinions in its favour. There can be no doubt,

however, that a large proportion of physicians, not excluding prominent and distinguished authorities, when casually confronted with the question whether sexual abstinence is harmless, will at once adopt the obvious path of least resistance and reply : Yes. In only a few cases do they make any qualification of this affirmative answer. This tendency is well illustrated by an inquiry made (now indeed thirty years ago) by Dr. Ludwig Jacobsohn, of St. Petersburg. He wrote to over 200 distinguished Russian and German professors of physiology, neurology, psychiatry, etc., asking them if they regarded sexual abstinence as harmless. The majority returned no answer ; eleven Russian and twenty-eight Germans replied, but four of them merely said that " they had no personal experience," etc. ; there thus remained thirty-five. Of these the majority affirmed the harmlessness of abstinence, though many qualified this opinion in various ways. Erb's opinion is regarded by Jacobsohn as standing alone ; he placed the age below which abstinence is harmless at twenty ; after that age he regarded it as injurious to health, seriously impeding work and capacity, while in neurotic persons it leads to still more serious results.

In England and America the proposition often formally accepted is usually worded : " Continence is not incompatible with health." It ought to be generally realized that abstract propositions of this kind are worthless, because they mean nothing. Every sane person, when confronted by the demand to boldly affirm or deny the proposition, " Continence is not incompatible with health," is bound to affirm it. He might firmly believe that continence is incompatible with the health of most people, and that prolonged continence is incompatible with anyone's health, and yet, if he is to be honest in the use of language, it would be impossible for him to deny the vague and abstract proposition that " Continence is not incompatible with health." Such propositions are therefore not only without value, but actually misleading.

It is obvious that the more extreme and unqualified opinions in favour of sexual abstinence are based not on medical, but on what the writers regard as moral considerations. Moreoever, as the same writers are usually equally emphatic in regard to the advantages of sexual intercourse in marriage, it is clear that they have committed themselves to a contradiction. The same act, as Näcke rightly pointed out, cannot become good or bad according as it is performed in or out of marriage. There is no magic efficacy in a few words pronounced by a priest or a government official.

It may be mentioned that the physicians of the last generation who so frequently proclaimed the harmlessness of sexual abstinence do not usually seem to have practised what they preached. I have no figures for English or American physicians, but in Germany more than

twenty years ago Professor Neisser investigated the point among ninety physicians and found that only one denied all intercourse prior to marriage and he attributed his exemption to an early engagement; twenty-eight had had intercourse while still in secondary schools. These results are confirmed by other investigations. Among 2,150 students at Moscow University early in the century, Tchlenoff found that more than half were not satisfied with abstinence, and one-third stated that they suffered from it; 67 per cent. had had sexual intercourse before entering the University.

Between those who unconditionally affirm or deny the harmlessness of sexual abstinence we find an intermediate party of authorities whose opinions are more qualified. Many of those who occupy this more guarded position are men whose opinions carry weight, and it is probable that with them rather than with the more extreme advocates on either side the greater measure of reason lies. So complex a question as this cannot be adequately investigated merely in the abstract, and settled by an unqualified negative or affirmative. It is a matter in which every case requires its own special and personal consideration.

" Where there is such a marked opposition of opinion truth is not exclusively on one side," remarked Löwenfeld. That sexual abstinence is certainly often injurious to neuropathic persons is now believed by a large number of authorities, and was perhaps first decisively stated by Krafft-Ebing. " In healthy and not hereditarily neuropathic men complete abstinence is possible without injury to the nervous system." Injurious effects, he continues, when they appear, seldom occur until between twenty-four and thirty-six years of age, and even then are not usually serious enough to lead to a visit to a doctor, consisting mainly in frequency of nocturnal emissions, pain in testes, or rectum, hyperæsthesia in the presence of women or of sexual ideas. Löwenfeld agrees with Freud and Gattel that the neurosis of anxiety tends to occur in the abstinent, careful examination showing that the abstinence is a factor in its production in both sexes. It is common among young women married to much older men, often appearing during the first years of marriage. As regards the sometimes alleged more serious effects of sexual abstinence on women, it is to be noted that (as shown for instance in Sweden by Westergaard) while the mortality of widowers and divorced men is very greatly in excess of that of married men, the mortality of widows and divorced women is only slightly in excess of that of married women. (Here, however, we must bear in mind that the death of the partner is more than simply the presence or the absence of sexual intercourse.) Under special circumstances, abstinence can be injurious, but on the whole the difficulties due to such abstinence are not severe, and they only exceptionally call forth actual disturbance in the nervous or psychic

spheres. Moll took a similar temperate and discriminating view. He regarded sexual abstinence before marriage as the ideal, but pointed out that we must avoid any doctrinal extremes in preaching sexual abstinence, for such preaching will merely lead to hypocrisy. Intercourse with prostitutes, and the tendency to change a woman like a garment, induce loss of sensitiveness to the spiritual and personal element in woman, while the dangers of sexual abstinence must no more be exaggerated than the dangers of sexual intercourse. Bloch also took a similar standpoint. He advocated abstention during early life and temporary abstention in adult life, such abstention being valuable, not only for the conservation and transformation of energy, but also to emphasize the fact that life contains other matters to strive for beyond the ends of sex.

It may be added that from the standpoint of Christian religious morality this same attitude, between the extremes of either party, recognizing the advantages of sexual abstinence but not insisting that they shall be purchased at any price, has also found representation. Thus, in England, an Anglican clergyman, the Rev. H. Northcote (in his *Christianity and Sex Problems*) dealt temperately and sympathetically with the difficulties of sexual abstinence, and was by no means convinced that such abstinence is always an unmixed advantage; while in Germany a Catholic priest, Karl Jentsch, set himself to oppose the rigorous and unqualified assertions in favour of sexual abstinence.

When we thus analyse and investigate the three main streams of expert opinion in regard to this question of sexual abstinence—the opinions in favour of it, the opinions in opposition to it, and the opinions which take an intermediate course—we can scarcely fail to conclude how unsatisfactory the whole discussion is. The state of "sexual abstinence" is a completely vague and indefinite state. The actually meaningless character of the expression "sexual abstinence" is shown by the frequency with which those who argue about it assume that it can, may, or even must, involve masturbation. That fact alone largely deprives it of value as morality and altogether as abstinence. At this point, indeed, we reach the most fundamental criticism to which the conception of "sexual abstinence" lies open. Rohleder submitted the current views on "sexual abstinence" to a searching criticism. He denied that strict sexual abstinence exists at all. "Sexual abstinence," he points out, in any strict sense of the term, must involve abstinence not merely from sexual intercourse but from auto-erotic manifestations, from masturbation, from homosexual acts, from all sexually perverse practices. It must further involve a permanent abstention from indulgence in erotic imaginations and voluptuous reverie. When, however, it is possible thus to render the whole psychic field a *tabula rasa* so far as sexual activity is concerned—and if it fails to be so constantly and consistently there is

no strict sexual abstinence—then, Rohleder points out, we have to consider whether we are not in presence of a case of sexual anæsthesia, of *anaphrodisia sexualis*. That is a question which is rarely, if ever, faced by those who discuss sexual abstinence. It is, however, an extremely pertinent question, because, as Rohleder insists, if sexual anæsthesia exists the question of sexual abstinence falls to the ground, for we can only " abstain " from actions that are in our power. Complete sexual anæsthesia is, however, so rare a state that it may be practically left out of consideration, and as the sexual impulse, if it exists, must by physiological necessity sometimes become active in some shape—even if only according to Freud's view, by transformation into some morbid neurotic condition—we reach the conclusion that " sexual abstinence " is strictly impossible. Rohleder has met with a few cases in which there seemed to him no escape from the conclusion that sexual abstinence existed, but in all of these he subsequently found that he was mistaken, usually owing to the practice of masturbation. The only kind of " sexual abstinence " that exists is a partial and temporary abstinence. Instead of saying, as some say, " Permanent abstinence is unnatural and cannot exist without physical and mental injury," we ought to say, Rohleder believes, " Permanent abstinence is unnatural and has never existed."

It is impossible not to feel as we contemplate this chaotic mass of opinions, that the whole discussion is revolving round a purely negative idea, and that fundamental fact is responsible for what at first seem to be startling conflicts of statement. If indeed we were to eliminate what is commonly regarded as the religious and moral aspect of the matter—an aspect, be it remembered, which has no bearing on the essential natural facts of the question—we cannot fail to perceive that these ostentatious differences of conviction would be reduced within very narrow and trifling limits.

We cannot strictly co-ordinate the impulse of reproduction with the impulse of nutrition. There are important differences between them, more especially the fundamental difference that while the satisfaction of the one impulse is absolutely necessary both to the life of the individual and of the race, the satisfaction of the other is absolutely necessary only to the life of the race. But when we reduce this question to one of " sexual abstinence " we are obviously placing it on the same basis as that of abstinence from food, that is to say at the opposite pole to which we place it when (as in the previous chapter) we consider it from the point of view of asceticism and chastity. It thus comes about that on this negative basis there really is an interesting analogy between nutritive abstinence, though necessarily only maintained incompletely and for a short time, and sexual abstinence, maintained more completely and for a longer time. A patient of Janet's seems to bring out clearly this resemblance. Nadia,

whom Janet was able to study during five years, was a young woman of twenty-seven, healthy and intelligent, not suffering from hysteria nor from anorexia, for she had a normal appetite. But she had an idea; she was anxious to be slim and to attain this end she cut down her meals to the smallest size, merely a little soup and a few eggs. She suffered much from the abstinence she thus imposed on herself, and was always hungry, though sometimes her hunger was masked by the inevitable stomach trouble caused by so long a persistence in this *régime*. At times, indeed, she had been so hungry that she had devoured greedily whatever she could lay her hands on, and not infrequently she could not resist the temptation to eat a few biscuits in secret. Such actions caused her horrible remorse, but, all the same, she would be guilty of them again. She realized the great efforts demanded by her way of life, and indeed looked upon herself as a heroine for resisting so long. "Sometimes," she told Janet, "I passed whole hours in thinking about food, I was so hungry. I swallowed my saliva, I bit my handkerchief, I rolled on the ground, I wanted to eat so badly. I searched books for descriptions of meals and feasts, I tried to deceive my hunger by imagining that I too was enjoying all these good things. I was really famished, and in spite of a few weaknesses for biscuits I know that I showed much courage."[1] Nadia's motive idea, that she wished to be slim, corresponds to the abstinent man's idea that he wishes to be "moral," and only differs from it by having the advantage of being somewhat more positive and personal, for the idea of the person who wishes to avoid sexual indulgence because it is "not right," is often not merely negative but impersonal and imposed by the social and religious environment. Nadia's occasional outbursts of reckless greediness correspond to the sudden impulses to resort to prostitution, and her secret weaknesses for biscuits, followed by keen remorse, to lapses into the habit of masturbation. Her fits of struggling and rolling on the ground are precisely like the outbursts of futile desire which occasionally occur to young abstinent men and women in health and strength. The absorption in thoughts about meals and in literary descriptions of meals is clearly analogous to the abstinent man's absorption in wanton thoughts and erotic books. Finally, Nadia's conviction that she is a heroine corresponds exactly to the attitude of self-righteousness which often marks the sexually abstinent.

If we turn to Freud's penetrating and suggestive study of the problem of sexual abstinence in relation to "civilized" sexual morality, we find that, though he makes no reference to the analogy with abstinence from food, his words would for the most part have an equal application to both cases. "The task of subduing so powerful an instinct as the sexual impulse, otherwise than by giving it satis-

[1] P. Janet, "La Maladie du Scrupule," *Revue Philosophique*, May, 1901.

faction," he writes, " is one which may employ the whole strength of a man. Subjugation through sublimation, by guiding the sexual forces into higher civilizational paths, may succeed with a minority, and even with these only for a time, least easily during the years of ardent youthful energy. Most others become neurotic or otherwise come to grief. Experience shows that the majority of people constituting our society are constitutionally unequal to the task of abstinence. We say, indeed, that the struggle with this powerful impulse and the emphasis the struggle involves on the ethical and æsthetic forces in the soul's life 'steels' the character, and for a few favourably organized natures this is true; it must also be acknowledged that the differentiation of individual character so marked in our time only becomes possible through sexual limitations. But in by far the majority of cases the struggle with sensuality uses up the available energy of character, and this at the very time when the young man needs all his strength in order to win his place in the world."

When we have put the problem on this negative basis of abstinence it is difficult to see how we can dispute the justice of Freud's conclusions. They hold good equally for abstinence from food and abstinence from sexual love. When we have placed the problem on a more positive basis, and are able to invoke the more active and fruitful motives of asceticism and chastity this unfortunate fight against a natural impulse is abolished. If chastity is an ideal of the harmonious play of all the organic impulses of the soul and body, if asceticism, properly understood, is the athletic striving for a worthy object which causes, for the time, an indifference to the gratification of sexual impulses, we are on wholesome and natural ground, and there is no waste of energy in fruitless striving for a negative end, whether imposed artificially from without, as it usually is, or voluntarily chosen by the individual himself.

For there is really no complete analogy between sexual desire and hunger, between abstinence from sexual relations and abstinence from food. When we put them both on the basis of abstinence we put them on a basis which covers the impulse for food but only half covers the impulse for sexual love. We confer no pleasure and no service in our food when we eat it. But the half of sexual love, perhaps the most important and ennobling half, lies in what we give and not in what we take. To reduce this question to the low level of abstinence, is not only to centre it in a merely negative denial but to make it a solely self-regarding question. Instead of asking: How can I bring joy and strength to another? we only ask: How can I preserve my empty virtue?

Therefore it is that from whatever aspect we consider the question—whether in view of the flagrant contradiction between the authorities

who have discussed this question, or of the illegitimate mingling here of moral and physiological considerations, or of the merely negative and indeed unnatural character of the " virtue " thus set up, or of the failure involved to grasp the ennoblingly altruistic and mutual side of sexual love—from whatever aspect we approach the problem of " sexual abstinence " we ought only to agree to do so under protest.

If we thus decide to approach it, and if we have reached the conviction—which in view of all the evidence we can scarcely escape—that, while sexual abstinence in so far as it may be recognized as possible is not incompatible with health there are yet many adults for whom it is harmful, and a very much larger number for whom when prolonged it is undesirable, we encounter a serious problem. It is a problem which confronts any person, and especially the physician, who may be called upon to give professional advice to his fellows on this matter. If sexual relationships are sometimes desirable for unmarried persons, or for married persons who, for any reason, are debarred from conjugal union, is a physician justified in recommending such sexual relationships to his patient ? This is a question that has frequently been debated, and decided in opposing senses.

Various distinguished physicians, especially in Germany, early in the present century, have proclaimed the duty of the doctor to recommend sexual intercourse to his patient whenever he considers it desirable—Gyurkovechky, for instance, and Nyström—and Max Marcuse stands out as a conspicuous advocate of the unconditional duty of the physician to advocate sexual intercourse in some cases, both to men and to women, and has on many occasions argued in this sense ; he is strongly of opinion that a physician who, allowing himself to be influenced by moral, sociological, or other considerations, neglects to recommend sexual intercourse when he considers it desirable for the patient's health, is unworthy of his profession, and should either give up medicine or send his patients to other doctors. Lederer goes even further when he states that it is the physician's duty in the case of a woman who is suffering from her husband's impotence, to advise her to have intercourse with another man, adding that " whether she does so with her husband's consent is no affair of the physician's, for he is not the guardian of morality, but the guardian of health." The physicians who publicly take this attitude are, however, a small minority. In England, so far as I am aware, no physician of eminence has openly proclaimed the duty of the doctor to advise sexual intercourse outside marriage, although, it is scarcely necessary to add, in England as elsewhere, it happens that doctors, including women doctors, from time to time privately point out to their unmarried and even married patients that sexual intercourse would probably be beneficial.

The duty of the physician to recommend sexual intercourse has

been denied as emphatically as it has been affirmed. Thus Eulenburg would by no means advise extra-conjugal relations to his patient; " such advice is quite outside the physicians's competence." It is, of course, denied by those who regard sexual abstinence as always harmless, if not beneficial. But it is also denied by many who consider that, under some circumstances, sexual intercourse would do good. Thus Moll has especially, and on many occasions, discussed the duty of the physician in relation to the question of advising sexual intercourse outside marriage. He considers that the physician has no right to overlook the possible results of his advice in inflicting venereal disease, or, in the case of a woman, pregnancy, on his patient. Nor will Moll admit that the physician is entitled to overlook the moral aspects of the question. A physician may know that a poor man could obtain many things good for his health by stealing, but he cannot advise him to steal.

It seems to me that there should be no doubt whatever as to the correct professional attitude of the physician in relation to this question of advice concerning sexual intercourse. The physician is never entitled to advise his patient to adopt sexual intercourse outside marriage nor any method of relief which is commonly regarded as illegitimate. It is said that the physician has nothing to do with considerations of conventional morality. If he considers that champagne would be good for a poor patient he ought to recommend him to take champagne; he is not called upon to consider whether the patient will beg, borrow, or steal the champagne. But, after all, even if that be admitted, it must still be said that the physician knows that the champagne, however obtained, is not likely to be poisonous. When, however, he prescribes sexual intercourse, with the same lofty indifference to practical considerations, he has no such knowledge. In giving such a prescription the physician has in fact not the slightest knowledge of what he may be prescribing. He may be giving his patient a venereal disease; he may be giving the anxieties and responsibilities of an illegitimate child; the prescriber is quite in the dark. He is in the same position as if he had prescribed a quack medicine of which the composition was unknown to him, with the added disadvantage that the medicine may turn out to be far more potently explosive than is the case with the usually innocuous patent medicine. The utmost that a physician can properly permit himself to do is to put the case impartially before his patient and to present to him all the risks. The solution must be for the patient himself to work out, as best he can, for it involves social and other considerations which, while they are indeed by no means outside the sphere of medicine, are certainly entirely outside the control of the individual private practitioner of medicine.

There is another reason why, having regard to the prevailing moral

opinions at all events among the middle classes, a physician should refrain from advising extra-conjugal intercourse: he places himself in a false relation to his social environment. He is recommending a remedy the nature of which he could not publicly avow, and so destroying the public confidence in himself. The only physician who is morally entitled to advise his patients to enter into extra-conjugal relationships is one who openly acknowledges that he is prepared to give such advice. The doctor who is openly working for social reform has perhaps won the moral right to give advice in accordance with the tendency of his public activity, but even then his advice may be dubiously judicious, and he would be better advised to confine his efforts at social reform to his public activities. The voice of the physician, as Professor Max Flesch of Frankfort, observes, is more and more heard in the development and new growth of social institutions; he is a natural leader in such movements, and proposals for reform properly come from him. "But," as Flesch continues, "publicly to accept the excellence of existing institutions and in the privacy of the consulting-room to give advice which assumes the imperfection of those institutions is illogical and confusing. It is the physician's business to give advice which is in accordance with the interests of the community as a whole, and those interests require that sexual relationships should be entered into between healthy men and women who are able and willing to accept the results of their union. That should be the physician's rule of conduct. Only so can he become, what to-day he is often proclaimed to be, the leader of the nation." This view is not, as we see, entirely in accord with that which assumes that the physician's duty is solely and entirely to his patient, without regard to the bearing of his advice on social conduct. The patient's interests are primary, but they are not entitled to be placed in antagonism to the interests of society. The advice given by the wise physician must always be in harmony with the social and moral tone of his age. Thus it is that the tendency among the younger generation of physicians to-day to take an active interest in raising that tone and in promoting social reform is full of promise for the future.

The physician is usually content to consider his duty to his patient in relationship to sexual abstinence as sufficiently fulfilled when he attempts to allay sexual hyperæsthesia by medical or hygienic treatment. It can scarcely be claimed, however, that the results of such treatment are usually satisfactory, and sometimes indeed the treatment has a result which is the reverse of that intended. The difficulty generally is that in order to be efficacious the treatment must be carried to an extreme which exhausts or inhibits not only the genital activities alone but the activities of the whole organism, and short of that it may prove a stimulant rather than a sedative. It is difficult

and usually impossible to separate out a man's sexual activities and bring influence to bear on these activities alone. Sexual activity is so closely intertwined with the other organic activities, erotic exuberance is so much a flower which is rooted in the whole organism, that the blow which crashes it may strike down the whole man. The bromides are recognized as powerful sexual sedatives, but their influence in this respect only makes itself felt when they have dulled all the finest energies of the organism and there is a growing medical opinion that their effects may be mischievous. Physical exercise is universally recommended to sexually hyperæsthetic patients. Yet most people, men and women, find that physical exercise is a positive stimulus to sexual activity. This is notably so as regards walking, and exuberantly energetic young women who are troubled by the irritant activity of their healthy sexual emotions sometimes spend a large part of their time in the vain attempt to lull their activity by long walks. Physical exercise only proves efficacious in this respect when it is carried to an extent which produces general exhaustion. Then indeed the sexual activity is lulled, but so are all the mental and physical activities. It is undoubtedly true that exercises and games of all sorts for young people of both sexes have a sexually hygienic as well as a generally hygienic influence which is undoubtedly beneficial. They are, on all grounds, to be preferred to prolonged sedentary occupations. But it is idle to suppose that games and exercises will suppress the sexual impulses, for in so far as they favour health they favour all the impulses that are the result of health. The most that can be expected is that they may tend to restrain the manifestations of sex by dispersing the energy they generate.

There are many physical rules and precautions which are advocated, not without reason, as tending to inhibit or diminish sexual activity. The avoidance of heat and the cultivation of cold is one of the most important of these. Hot climates, a close atmosphere, heavy bed-clothing, hot baths, all tend powerfully to excite the sexual system, for that system is a peripheral sensory organ, and whatever stimulates generally the skin stimulates the sexual system. Cold, which contracts the skin, also deadens the sexual feelings, a fact which the ascetics of old knew and acted upon. The garments and the posture of the body are not without influence. Constriction or pressure in the neighbourhood of the sexual region, even tight corsets, as well as internal pressure, as from a distended bladder, are sources of sexual irritation. Sleeping on the back, which congests the spinal centres, also acts in the same way, as has long been known by those who attend to sexual hygiene ; thus it is stated that in the Franciscan order it is prohibited to lie on the back. Food and drink are, further, powerful sexual stimulants. This is true even of the simplest and most wholesome nourishment, but it is more especially true of flesh meat, and, above

all, of alcohol in its stronger forms such as spirits, liqueurs, sparkling and heavy wines, and even many English beers. This has always been clearly realized by those who cultivate asceticism, and it is one of the powerful reasons why alcohol should not be given in early youth. As St. Jerome wrote, when telling Eustochium that she must avoid wine like poison, " wine and youth are the two fires of lust. Why add oil to the flame ? "

Some years ago the effects of under-nutrition on the sexual impulse were studied at the Nutrition Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution in Boston by W. R. Miles (*Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases*, 1919). The inquiry into sex effects was a by-product of the investigation, and it is believed that the influence of suggestion may be for the most part excluded.

Two squads of students, all young men and one married (" a clean group of honest, virile fellows, with no venereal disease "), were selected, twelve in each squad, the second squad being for control purposes, and put under a restricted diet, approximately two-third to one-half of their supposed caloric requirements, during a period of four months. The main results were a reduction in basal metabolism of 18 per cent. per kilogramme of body-weight, lowered blood pressure, and a drop in pulse-rates but not in temperature. There was little decrease in neuro-muscular co-ordination, no falling off in scholastic work, very little in physical strength, and no apparent lack of vitality or efficiency or athletic vigour. A few days after the termination of the experiment the inquiries regarding sex phenomena were made of each man privately and individually. There had been no preliminary reference to this subject, but the men were all willing to discuss the matter freely and fully. They were warned of the possibility of fallacies due to suggestion or introspection. Their evidence gave the impression of truth. Out of 23 of the students of whom the inquiry was made, 22 reported a decreased general sex interest, the remaining 1 stating that there was no change ; 16 out of 22 stated that there was a decrease in the number of nocturnal emissions, 6 observing no change, and none noting any increase ; 13 had observed a diminished frequency of erections, 4 observing no change in this respect ; 9 found the desire for association with the opposite sex diminished ; several reported that the sex appeal of dances, social occasions, picture shows, stories, etc., were diminished ; the married man, it may be noted, used the term " unsexed " to describe the effect of the low diet on himself. At the time of the inquiry, about a week after the end of the experiment, many were already experiencing a return of normal sex desires and activities under an unrestricted diet. Miles remarks that these results confirm the supposed connection between sex and metabolism and agree with the results reached by Riddle and others, who, studying lower animals, find that sexual activity is probably dependent on the

metabolic level. Nature appears to require a high metabolic level for purposes of race propagation.

Mental exercise, like physical exercise, has sometimes been advocated as a method of calming sexual excitement, but it seems to be equally equivocal in its action. If it is profoundly interesting and exciting it may stir up rather than lull the sexual emotions, like sport which has even been recommended as a cure for frigidity in women. If it arouses little interest it is unable to exert any kind of influence. This is true even of mathematical occupations which have been advocated by various authorities, including Broussais, as aids to sexual hygiene. "I have tried mechanical mental work," a lady writes, "such as solving arithmetical or algebraic problems, but it does no good; in fact, it seems only to increase the excitement." "I studied and especially turned my attention to mathematics," a clergyman writes, "with a view to check my sexual tendencies. To a certain extent I was successful. But at the approach of an old friend, a voice or a touch, these tendencies came back again with renewed strength. I found mathematics, however, the best thing on the whole to take off my attention from women, better than religious exercises which I tried when younger (twenty-two to thirty)." At the best, however, such devices are of merely temporary efficacy.

There has been discussion at various times of the effects on health of a celibate life as prescribed by the Catholic Church in the monastic life and on the clergy. Opinions have differed. Löwenfeld in Germany has found no special proclivity to neurasthenia among the Catholic clergy, and, when found, there seemed no reason to suspect a sexual origin. On the other hand the sufferings of the modern Catholic clergy in Germany and the licentiousness of some were discussed in *Sexual-Probleme* in February, 1910. As regards the monastic life of a very strict order we find, on the one hand, Dr. Butterfield of Natal writing (*British Medical Journal*, September 15th, 1906): "I have had two years' close experience and connection with the Trappists, both as medical attendant and as being a Catholic in creed myself. I have studied them and investigated their life, habits, and diet, and though I should be very backward in adopting it myself, as not suited to me individually, the great bulk of them are in absolute ideal health and strength, seldom ailing, capable of vast work, mental and physical. Their life is very simple and very regular. A healthier body of men and women, with perfect equanimity of temper—this latter I lay great stress on—it would be difficult to find." But, on the other hand, Dr. John Evans wrote to me six years later, also from Natal: "I beg to differ from Dr. Butterfield about the Trappists in Natal. I have seen many of them, and, with all due respect to him, they are not a healthy body of men and women; he, being a Roman Catholic, probably sees them through the

eye of Faith." If we go back to earlier ages of the Church we find ample evidence (as set forth in Lea's history of *Sacerdotal Celibacy*) of the evil and suffering due to the unnatural restraints imposed on those unfitted to submit to them, both men and women, and the sometimes epidemical reactions of licentious excess in the cloisters.

It is easier to avoid arousing the sexual impulse than to impose silence on it by hygienic measures when once aroused. It is in childhood and youth that measures may be most reasonably observed to avoid any premature sexual excitement. In one group of stolidly normal children influences that might be expected to act sexually pass away unperceived. At the other extreme, another group of children are so neurotically and precociously sensitive that no precautions will preserve them from such influences. But between these groups there is another, probably much the largest, who resist slight sexual suggestions but may succumb to stronger or longer influences, and on these the cares of sexual hygiene may profitably be bestowed. Rural life is on one side the reverse of a safeguard against sexual influences, on the other hand, in so far as it involves hard work and simple living under conditions that are not nervously stimulating, it is favourable to a delayed sexual activity in youth and to a relative continence. Ammon, in the course of his anthropological investigations of Baden conscripts, found that sexual intercourse was rare in the country before twenty, and even sexual emissions during sleep rare before nineteen or twenty.

After puberty, when the spontaneous and inner voice of sex may at any moment suddenly make itself heard, all hygienic precautions are liable to be flung to the winds, and even the youth or maiden most anxious to retain the ideals of chastity can often do little but wait till the storm has passed. It sometimes happens that a prolonged period of sexual storm and stress occurs soon after puberty, and then dies away although there has been little or no sexual gratification, to be succeeded by a period of comparative calm. It must be remembered that in many, and perhaps most, individuals, men and women, the sexual appetite, unlike hunger or thirst, can after a prolonged struggle, be reduced to a more or less quiescent state which, far from injuring, may even benefit the physical and psychic vigour generally. This may happen whether or not sexual gratification has been obtained. If there has never been any such gratification, the struggle is less severe and sooner over, unless the individual is of highly erotic temperament. If there has been gratification, if the mind is filled not merely with desires but with joyous experience to which the body also has grown accustomed, then the struggle is longer and more painfully absorbing. The succeeding relief, however, if it comes, is sometimes more complete and is more likely to be associated with a state of psychic health. For the fundamental experiences of life, under normal conditions, bring

not only intellectual sanity, but emotional pacification. A conquest of the sexual appetites which has never at any period involved a gratification of those appetites seldom produces results that commend themselves as rich and beautiful.

In these combats there are, however, no permanent conquests. For a large number of people, indeed, though there may be emotional changes and fluctuations dependent on a variety of circumstances, there can scarcely be said to be any conquest at all. They are either always yielding to the impulses that assail them, or always resisting those impulses, in the first case with remorse, in the second with dissatisfaction. In either case much of their lives, at the time when life is most vigorous, is wasted. With women, if they happen to be of strong passions and reckless impulses to abandonment, the results may be highly enervating, if not disastrous to the general psychic life. It is to this cause, indeed, that some have been inclined to attribute the comparative mediocrity of women's work in artistic and intellectual fields. Women of intellectual force are frequently if not generally women of strong passions, and if they resist the tendency to merge themselves in the conjugal sphere, their lives are often wasted in emotional conflict and their psychic natures impoverished. The frequent nnmerical preponderance of celibate women teachers has caused misgiving among sagacious observers, and is unsatisfactory in its results on the pupils of both sexes.

Thus while it is an immense benefit in physical and psychic development if the eruption of the disturbing sexual emotions can be delayed until puberty or adolescence, and while it is a very great advantage, after that eruption has occurred, to be able to gain control of these emotions, to crush altogether the sexual nature would be a barren, if not, indeed, a perilous victory, bringing with it no satisfaction. "If I had only had three weeks' happiness," said a woman, "I would not quarrel with Fate, but to have one's whole life so absolutely empty is horrible." If such vacuous self-restraint may, by courtesy, be termed a virtue, it is but a negative virtue. The persons who achieve it, as the result of congenitally feeble sexual aptitudes, have merely made a virtue of their weakness. Many others, whose instincts were less weak, when they disdainfully put to flight the desires of sex in early life, have found that in later life that foe returns in tenfold force and perhaps in unnatural shapes.[1]

I have been viewing sexual abstinence as an ascetic ideal which, in

[1] Corre mentions that of thirteen priests convicted of crime, six were guilty of sexual attempts on children, and of eighty-three convicted lay teachers, forty-eight had committed similar offences. Without going so far as crime, many moral and religious men, clergymen and others, who have led severely abstinent lives in youth, sometimes experience in middle age or later the eruption of almost uncontrollable sexual impulses, normal or abnormal. In women such manifestation are apt to take the form of obsessional thoughts of sexual character.

its more temperate forms, may be regarded as a justifiable method of discipline and in its more extreme forms as an extravagant religious aspiration. It is necessary to point out that these forms may pass beyond any legitimate moral or religious framework and become a disease. Even in eminent philosophers, theologians, and saints we may detect traits that must be regarded as so far outside the range of natural impulse as to be definitely morbid. Such traits have been noted even in St. Paul and in Buddha, in Plato and St. Augustine. Arnold Kamiat, who discussed this problem in a study of the "Psychology of Asceticism" (in the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* for 1928) considers that there are three psychopathic routes which may lead to a morbid asceticism: (1) inadequacy of normal demands of life; (2) world phobia with flight from life; (3) immersion of the self in a fantastic world. It may be commented that these three routes may be united, and Kamiat regards them all as indicative of the obsessive mentality of compulsive neurosis. They do not, it may be added, seem far removed from the schizophrenic attitude. We have to recognize that while in its more moderate demands an ideal of sexual abstinence remains within the sphere of sanity it tends to pass beyond that sphere in its more extravagant demands.

The conception of "sexual abstinence" is, we see, an entirely false and artificial conception. It is not only ill-adjusted to the hygienic facts of the case but it fails even to invoke any genuinely moral motive, for it is exclusively self-regarding and self-centred. It only becomes genuinely moral, and truly inspiring, when we transform it into the altruistic virtue of self-sacrifice. When we have done so we see that the element of abstinence in it ceases to be essential. In a sane natural order all the impulses are centred in the fulfilment of needs and not in their denial. Moreover, in this special matter of sex, it is inevitable that the needs of others, and not merely the needs of the individual himself, should determine action. It is more especially the needs of the female which are the determining factor; for those needs are more various, complex, and elusive, and in his attentiveness to their gratification the male finds a source of endless erotic satisfaction. It might be thought that the introduction of an altruistic motive here is merely the claim of theoretical morality insisting that there shall be a firm curb on animal instinct. But, as we again and again see, it is not so. The animal instinct itself makes this demand. It is a biological law that rules throughout the zoological world and has involved the universality of courtship. In man it is only modified because in man sexual needs are not entirely concentrated in reproduction, but more or less penetrate the whole of life.

While from the point of view of society, as from that of Nature, the end and object of the sexual impulse is procreation, and nothing beyond procreation, that is by no means true for the individual, whose

main object it must be to fulfil himself harmoniously with that due regard for others which the art of living demands. Even if sexual relationships had no connection with procreation whatever—as some Central Australian tribes believe—they would still be justifiable, and are, indeed, an indispensable aid to the best moral development of the individual, for it is only in so intimate a relationship as that of sex that the finest graces and aptitudes of life have full scope. Even the saints cannot forego the sexual side of life. The best and most accomplished saints—even the exquisite Francis of Assisi—had stored up in their past all the experiences that go to the complete realization of life, and if it were not so they would have been the less saints.

The element of positive virtue thus only enters when the control of the sexual impulse has passed beyond the stage of rigid and sterile abstinence and has become not merely a deliberate refusal of what is evil in sex, but a deliberate acceptance of what is good. It is only at that moment that such control becomes a real part of the great art of living. For the art of living, like any other art, is not compatible with rigidity, but lies in the weaving of a perpetual harmony between refusing and accepting, between giving and taking.

The future, it is clear, belongs ultimately to those who are slowly building up sounder traditions into the structure of life. The "problem of sexual abstinence" will more and more sink into insignificance. There remains the great solid fact of love, the great solid fact of chastity. These are eternal. Between them there is nothing but harmony. The development of one involves the development of the other.

It has been necessary to treat seriously this problem of "sexual abstinence" because we have behind us the traditions of two thousand years based on certain ideals of sexual law and sexual license together with the long effort to build up practices more or less conditioned by those ideals. We cannot immediately escape from these traditions even when we question their validity for ourselves. We have not only to recognize their existence, but also to accept the fact that for some time to come they must still to a considerable extent control the thoughts and even in some degree the actions of existing communities.

It is undoubtedly deplorable. It involves the introduction of an artificial into a real natural order. Love is real and positive; chastity is real and positive. But sexual abstinence is unreal and negative, in the strict sense perhaps impossible. The underlying feelings of all those who have emphasized its importance is that a physiological process can be good or bad according as it is or is not carried out under certain arbitrary external conditions, which render it licit or illicit. An act of sexual intercourse under the name of "marriage" is beneficial; the very same act, under the name of "incontinence,"

is pernicious. No physiological process, and still less any spiritual process, can bear such restriction. It is as much as to say that a meal becomes good or bad, digestible or indigestible, according as a grace is or is not pronounced before the eating of it.

It is deplorable because, such a conception being essentially unreal, an element of unreality is thus introduced into a matter of the gravest concern alike to the individual and to society. Artificial disputes have been introduced where no matter of real dispute need exist. A contest has been carried on marked by all the ferocity which marks contests about metaphysical or pseudo-metaphysical differences having no concrete basis in the actual world. As will happen in such cases, there has, after all, been no real difference between the disputants because the point they quarrelled over was unreal. In truth each side was right and each side was wrong.

It is necessary, we see, that the balance should be held even. An absolute license is bad; an absolute abstinence—even though some by nature or circumstances are urgently called to adopt it—is also bad. They are both alike away from the gracious equilibrium of Nature. And the force, we see, which naturally holds this balance even is the biological fact that the act of sexual union is the satisfaction of the erotic needs, not of one person, but of two persons.

# CHAPTER VII

# PROSTITUTION

I. *The Orgy* :—The Religious Origin of the Orgy—The Feast of Fools—Recognition of the Orgy by the Greeks and Romans—The Orgy Among Savages—The Drama—The Object Subserved by the Orgy.

II. *The Origin and Development of Prostitution* :—The Definition of Prostitution—Prostitution Among Savages—The Conditions under which Professional Prostitution Arises—Sacred Prostitution—The Rite of Mylitta—The Practice of Prostitution to Obtain a Marriage Portion—The Rise of Secular Prostitution in Greece—Prostitution in Rome—The Influence of Christianity on Prostitution—The Effort to Combat Prostitution—The Medieval Brothel—The Appearance of the Courtesan—Veronica Franco—Later Attempts to Eradicate Prostitution—The Regulation of Prostitution—Its Futility becoming Recognized.

III. *The Causes of Prostitution* :—Prostitution as a Part of the Marriage System—The Complex Causation of Prostitution—The Motives Assigned by Prostitutes—(1) Economic Factor of Prostitution—Poverty Seldom the Chief Motive for Prostitution—But Economic Pressure Exerts a Real Influence—The Large Proportion of Prostitutes Recruited from Domestic Service—Significance of this Fact—(2) The Biological Factor of Prostitution—The So-called Born-Prostitute—Alleged Identity with the Born-Criminal—The Sexual Instinct in Prostitutes—The Physical and Psychic Characters of Prostitutes—(3) Moral Necessity as a Factor in the Existence of Prostitution—The Moral Advocates of Prostitution—The Moral Attitude of Christianity towards Prostitution—The Attitude of Protestantism—Recent Advocates of the Moral Necessity of Prostitution—(4) Civilization Value as a Factor of Prostitution—The Influence of Urban Life—The Craving for Excitement—Why Servant-girls so often turn to Prostitution—The Small Part Played by Seduction—Prostitutes came largely from the Country—The Appeal of Civilization Attracts Women to Prostitution—The Corresponding Attraction Felt by Men—The Prostitute as Artist and Leader of Fashion—The Charm of Vulgarity.

IV. *The Present Social Attitude Towards Prostitution* :—The Decay of the Brothel—The Tendency to the Humanization of Prostitution—The Monetary Aspects of Prostitution—The Geisha—The Hetaira—The Moral Revolt against Prostitution—Squalid Vice Based on Luxurious Virtue—The Ordinary Attitude towards Prostitutes—The Need of Reforming Prostitution—The Need of Reforming Marriage—These Two Needs Closely Correlated—The Dynamic Relationships Involved.

## I. The Orgy

Traditional morality, religion, and established convention combine to promote not only the extreme of rigid abstinence but also that of reckless license. They preach and idealize the one extreme; they drive those who cannot accept it to adopt the opposite extreme. In the great ages of religion it even happens that the severity of the rule of abstinence is more or less deliberately tempered by the permission for occasional outbursts of license. We thus have the orgy, which flourished in medieval days and is, indeed, in its largest sense, a

universal manifestation, having a function to fulfil in every orderly and laborious civilization, built up on natural energies that are bound by more or less inevitable restraints.

The sanctification of the orgy is so universal a phenomenon that we may find illustrations of it almost anywhere at random. A good example, illustrating its religious character, is furnished in the Sacti-puja rites of Vishnu worship in India where (as described by Dubois) the things which are at other times most impure become freely permissible and sacrifices are made, for instance, to the pudendal region of a naked girl. It is in Greece, however, that the moral and religious significance of the orgy is most clearly in evidence. The element of orgy even in the sacred Eleusinian festival is clearly brought out by Aristophanes in his solemn representation of the festival in the *Frogs*. Eisler, while accepting Farnell's view of Dionysiac ecstasy as in furtherance of fertility in Nature, argues with much force (in *Imago*, April, 1914) that it also had a personal and more intimate significance, indicated in the line preserved by Suidas to the effect that all must join in the Dionysiac rites or become victims of melancholy. In other words Dionysus was the Saviour, the Liberator from madness, and that by virtue of the wholesome discharge of suppressed emotions which his rites effected. The modern doctrine of hysteria, as a state of depression due to repressed emotions, Eisler considers, throws a new light on Aristotle's doctrine of catharsis. The severe seclusion of early Greek women must have furnished an even more fertile ground for hysteria than the sexual abstinence imposed on women in a later age. The Dionysiac rites—the passionate music, the wild dances, the enjoyment of wine, the rending of animals, the flagellations, the aggressive outbursts—furnished a complete cathartic antidote to hysterical depression.[1] Nietzsche (who remarks that the modern man may find in drunkenness a clue to the Dionysiac orgy) throws out valuable suggestions in his *Birth of Tragedy*.

The consideration of the orgy, it may be seen, lifts us beyond the merely sexual sphere, into a higher and wider region which belongs to religion. The Greek *orgeia* referred originally to ritual things done with a religious purpose, though later, when dances of Bacchanal and the like lost their sacred and inspiring character, the idea was fostered by Christianity that such things were immoral. Yet Christianity was itself in its origin an orgy of the higher spiritual activities released from the uncongenial servitude of classic civilization, a great festival of the poor and the humble, of the slave and the sinner. And when, with the necessity for orderly social organization, Christianity had ceased to be this it still recognized, as Paganism had done, the need for the orgy. It appears that in 743 at a Synod

[1] See, for instance, Hans Licht, *Sexual Life in Ancient Greece*, Ch. VI.

held in Hainault reference was made to the February debauch (*de Spurcalibus in februario*) as a pagan practice; yet it was precisely this pagan festival which was embodied in the accepted customs of the Christian Church as the chief orgy of the ecclesiastical year, the great Carnival prefixed to the long fast of Lent. The celebration on Shrove Tuesday and the previous Sunday constituted a Christian Bacchanalian festival in which all classes joined. The greatest freedom and activity of physical movement was encouraged; "some go about naked without shame, some crawl on all fours, some on stilts, some imitate animals." As time went on the Carnival lost its most strongly marked Bacchanalian features, but it still retains its essential character as a permitted and temporary relaxation of the tension of customary restraints and conventions. The Medieval Feast of Fools—a New Year's Revel well established by the twelfth century, mainly in France—also presented an expressive picture of a Christian orgy in its extreme form, for here the most sacred ceremonies of the Church became the subject of fantastic parody. The Church, according to Nietzsche's saying, like all wise legislators, recognized that where higher impulses and habits have to be cultivated, intercalary days must be appointed in which these impulses and habits may be denied, and so learn to hunger anew.[1] The clergy took the leading part in these folk-festivals, for to the men of that age, as Méray remarks, "the temple offered the complete notes of the human gamut; they found there the teaching of all duties, the consolation of all sorrows, the satisfaction of all joys. The sacred festivals of medieval Christianity were not a survival from Roman times; they leapt from the very heart of Christian society."[2] But, as Méray admits, all great and vigorous peoples, of the East and the West, have found it necessary sometimes to play with their sacred things.

[1] This was clearly realized by the more intelligent upholders of the Feast of Fools. Austere persons wished to abolish this Feast, and in a remarkable petition sent up by the Theological Faculty of Paris the case for the Feast is thus presented: "We do this according to ancient custom, in order that folly, which is second nature to man and seems to be inborn, may at least once a year have free outlet. Wine casks would burst if we failed sometimes to remove the bung and let in air. Now we are all ill-bound casks and barrels which would let out the wine of wisdom if by constant devotion and fear of God we allowed it to ferment. We must let in air so that it may not be spoilt. Thus on some days we give ourselves up to sport, so that with the greater zeal we may afterwards return to the worship of God." The Feast of Fools was not suppressed until the middle of the sixteenth century, and relics of it persisted (as at Aix) till near the end of the eighteenth century.

[2] A Méray, *La Vie au Temps des Libres Precheurs*, vol. ii, Ch. X. A scholarly account of the Feast of Fools is given by E. K. Chambers, *The Medieval Stage*, Ch. XIII. It is true that the Church and the early Fathers often anathematized the theatre. But Gregory of Nazianzen wished to found a Christian theatre; the Medieval Mysteries were certainly under the protection of the clergy; and St. Thomas Aquinas, the greatest of the schoolmen, only condemns the theatre with cautious qualifications

Among the Greeks and Romans this need is everywhere visible, not only in their comedy and their literature generally, but in everyday life. As Nietzsche remarks (in his *Birth of Tragedy*) the Greeks recognized all natural impulses, even those that are seemingly unworthy, and safeguarded them from working mischief by providing channels into which, on special days and in special rites, the surplus of wild energy might harmlessly flow. Plutarch, the last and most influential of the Greek moralists, well says, when advocating festivals (in his essay " On the Training of Children "), that " even in bows and harps we loosen their strings that we may bend and wind them up again." Seneca, perhaps the most influential of Roman if not of European moralists, even recommended occasional drunkenness. " Sometimes," he wrote in his *De Tranquillitate*, " we ought to come even to the point of intoxication, not for the purpose of drowning ourselves but of sinking ourselves deep in wine. For it washes away cares and raises our spirits from the lowest depths. The inventor of wine is called *Liber* because he frees the soul from the servitude of care, releases it from slavery, quickens it, and makes it bolder for all undertakings." The Romans were a sterner and more serious people than the Greeks, but on that very account they recognized the necessity of occasionally relaxing the moral fibres in order to preserve their tone, and encouraged the prevalence of festivals which were marked by much more abandonment than those of Greece. When these festivals began to lose their moral sanctions and to fall into decay the decadence of Rome had begun.

The alcoholic indulgence in which Seneca was able to find moral value has remained, or, rather, increased in decadent decay to our own day, whether or not in conjunction with the sexual unrestraint with which it sometimes tends to be associated. In the present century it has come under some measure of control, both by social and legal influences, and there has always been a distinction between the alcoholic orgy of the German and Anglo-Saxon peoples and that of the, in this respect, more temperate Latin peoples. This distinction was brought out in vivid contrast during the Great War. I may quote a letter written at that time by a woman correspondent well acquainted alike with France, England, and the United States: " The need to get perfectly spifflicated is a sort of inborn disease of the Anglo-Saxon. We are absolutely hag-ridden with it in Paris at present. The Americans are just as bad as the British. Pay-day is a nightmare of the military police, and every offence goes down to *vin blanc !* At first I used to enjoy going out to dinner with any of these new friends and allies. Now, sadder and wiser, I let a few of them come occasionally to tea with me. Perhaps I am getting old. But it was always the same ; a perfect good dinner in an excellent place, with two quarts of execrable champagne—the assumption was

that you would each drink one ; then some old port and a couple of *fine* champagnes, and thus amiably mellowed it seemed quite natural and proper to do those things which you would consider unseemly when quite sober. And the Anglo-Saxon tells you at once of his conquests. From a Latin of the same social caste you could not wring an admission that he had ever had an *amourette*. His entire life was a desert until he met you. He orders a quite frugal dinner because he knows he will have to pay for it, and you completely forget what you are eating in his absorption in your personality. You learn things about your psychology which are uncanny. A rather meagre bottle of wine is ordered, and as likely as not there is no white and gold label on it, but just a microscopic *étiquette* giving the year of the vintage. The perfume and general seductiveness of that one bottle seem to give you a new and quite charming angle on your own view of yourself. You feel, somehow, that you are entering upon something finer in the way of human relation than you have ever quite grasped before ; you are, as it were, finding yourself ; of course with his help. Vistas open. You may not say it aloud, but you think of Thoreau's beautiful saying about friendship : 'To have made one new human relation is enough to make a whole year memorable.' There is no external pressure brought to bear after coffee. If you decree to be set down at your door, that is where you go in peace to let the flower of a perfect evening (from your point of view and therefore also from his) bloom in the silence. If the flower has bloomed in the magic Japanese fashion, why so much the better for all concerned, but if it has not, why, that is interesting too. Probably you will wonder how an intelligent woman, seeing through this as I do, still prefers it to a frankly tipsy fall from grace. But there is an equal sincerity in each. The sincerity of the one lies in its charming technique ; the effort made to evoke pleasant reactions in yourself was a perfectly sincere effort. The sincere effort of the other was an effort to get tipsy, which you were most heartily invited to share if you could or would."

All over the world, and not excepting the most primitive savages—for even savage life is built up on systematic constraints which sometimes need relaxation—the principle of the orgy is accepted. Thus Spencer and Gillen describe the Nathagura or fire-ceremony of the Warramunga tribe of Central Australia, a festival taken part in by both sexes, in which all the ordinary rules of social life are broken, a kind of Saturnalia in which, however, there is no sexual license, for sexual license is, it need scarcely be said, no essential part of the orgy, even when the orgy lightens the burden of sexual constraints. In a widely different part of the world, in British Columbia, the Salish Indians, according to Hill Tout, believed that, long before the whites came, their ancestors observed a Sabbath or seventh day ceremony

for dancing and praying, assembling at sunrise and dancing till noon. The Sabbath, or periodically recurring orgy,—not a day of tension and constraint but a festival of joy, a rest from all the duties of everyday life,—has formed an essential part of many of the ancient civilizations on which our own has been built; it is probable that the stability of these ancient civilizations was intimately associated with their recognition of the need of a Sabbath orgy. Such festivals are, indeed, as Crawley observes, processes of purification and reinvigoration, the effort to put off "the old man" and put on "the new man," to enter with fresh energy on the path of everyday life.

The orgy is thus an institution which by no means has its significance only for the past. On the contrary, the high tension, the rigid routine, the grey monotony of modern life insistently call for moments of organic relief, though the precise form that orgiastic relief takes must necessarily change with other social changes. It is often regretted that dancing in the old, free, and natural manner has gone out of fashion or become unwholesome. Dancing is indeed the most fundamental and primitive form of the orgy, and that which most completely and healthfully fulfils its object. For while it is undoubtedly, as we see even among animals, a process by which sexual tumescence is accomplished, it by no means necessarily becomes focussed in sexual detumescence but may itself become a detumescent discharge of accumulated energy. It was on this account that, at all events in former days, the clergy in Spain, on moral grounds, openly encouraged the national passion for dancing. But in civilized centres the dance often tends among the masses to become degraded, as is shown by the history of the so-called "Taxi-dance halls" in America. Among cultured people in modern times, the orgy tends to take on a purely cerebral form, which is less wholesome because it fails to lead to harmonious discharge along motor channels. In these comparatively passive forms, however, the orgy tends to become more and more pronounced under the conditions of civilization. Aristotle's famous statement concerning the function of tragedy as "purgation" is a recognition of the beneficial effects of the orgy. Wagner's music-dramas appeal powerfully to this need; the theatre, now as ever, fulfils a great function of the same kind, inherited from the ancient days when it was the ordered expression of a sexual festival.[1] The theatre, indeed, has tended in recent times to approximate to the more serious dramatic performances of classic days by being transferred to the day-time and the open-air. France took the initiative in these performances, analogous to the Dionysiac festivals of antiquity and the Mysteries and Moralities of the Middle Ages. The movement began at Orange, and in Marseilles the first

[1] The cinema, however, has now largely taken the place of the theatre in furnishing some measure of orgiastic relief for the masses.

formal open-air theatre was erected since classic days. In England, likewise, there has been a great extension of popular interest in dramatic performances, and the Pageants, carried out and taken part in by the population of the region commemorated in the Pageant, are festivals of the same character. In England, however, at the present time, the real popular orgiastic festivals are the Bank Holidays, with which may be associated the occasional celebrations, such as Coronations and Jubilees, called out by comparatively insignificant national events but still adequate to arouse orgiastic emotions as genuine as those of antiquity, even if lacking in beauty and religious consecration. It is easy indeed for the narrowly austere person to view such manifestations with a supercilious smile, but in the eyes of the moralist and the philosopher these orgiastic festivals exert a salutary and preservative function. In every age of dull and monotonous routine—and all civilization involves such routine—many natural impulses and functions tend to become suppressed, atrophied, or perverted. They need these moments of joyous exercise and expression, moments in which they may not necessarily attain their full activity but in which they will at all events be able, as Cyples expressed it, to rehearse their great possibilities.

## II. The Origin and Development of Prostitution

The more refined forms of the orgy flourish in civilization, although on account of their mainly cerebral character they are not the most beneficent or the most effective. The various arts, indeed, tend to become transformations of the orgy, and it has been argued that all play exerts a cathartic influence. The more primitive and muscular forms of the orgy tend under the influence of civilization, to fall into discredit and to be so far as possible suppressed altogether. It is partly in this way that civilization encourages prostitution. For the orgy in its primitive forms, forbidden to show itself openly and reputably, seeks the darkness, and allying itself with a fundamental instinct to which civilized society offers no complete legitimate satisfaction, it entrenches itself in the very centre of civilized life, and thereby constitutes a problem of immense difficulty and importance.

It is commonly said that prostitution has existed always and everywhere. That statement is far from correct. A kind of amateur prostitution is occasionally found among savages, but usually it is only when barbarism is fully developed, and is already approaching the stage of civilization, that well-developed prostitution is found. It exists in a systematic form in every civilization, but is far from being "the oldest profession."

What is prostitution? There has been considerable discussion as to the correct definition of prostitution.[1] The Roman Ulpian said that a prostitute was one who openly abandons her body to a number of men without choice, for money.[2] Not all modern definitions have been so satisfactory. It is sometimes said a prostitute is a woman who gives herself to numerous men. To be sound, however, a definition must be applicable to both sexes alike and we should certainly hesitate to describe a man who had sexual intercourse with many women as a prostitute. The idea of venality, the intention to sell the favours of the body, is essential to the conception of prostitution. Thus Guyot defines a prostitute as "any person for whom sexual relationships are subordinated to gain." It is not, however, adequate to define a prostitute simply as a woman who sells her body. That is done every day by women who become wives in order to gain a home and a livelihood, yet, immoral as this conduct may be from any high ethical standpoint, it would be inconvenient and even misleading to call it prostitution.[3] It is better, therefore, to define a prostitute as a woman who temporarily sells her sexual favours to various persons. Thus, according to Wharton's *Law Lexicon*, a prostitute is "a woman who indiscriminately consorts with men for hire"; Bonger states that "those women are prostitutes who sell their bodies for the exercise of sexual acts and make of this a profession." As, finally, the prevalence of homosexuality has led to the existence of male prostitutes, the definition must be put in a form irrespective of sex, and we may, therefore, say that a prostitute is a person who makes it a profession to gratify the lust of various persons of the opposite sex or the same sex. Iwan Bloch, who devoted the first chapter of his valuable work, *Die Prostitution*, to a discussion of the definitions, reached a conclusion not very dissimilar from that here accepted. Abraham Flexner also, in his searching and impartial study of *Prostitution in Europe*, concludes that prostitution is "characterised by three elements variously combined: barter, promiscuity, emotional indifference. Any person is a prostitute who

[1] For the origin of the names to designate the prostitute, see Schrader, *Real-lexicon*, art. "Beischläferin."

[2] *Digest*, lib. xxiii, tit. ii, p. 43. If she only gave herself to one or two persons, though for money, it was not prostitution.

[3] "Such marriages are sometimes stigmatized as 'legalized prostitution,'" remarks Sidgwick (*Methods of Ethics*, Bk. iii, Ch. XI), "but the phrase is felt to be extravagant and paradoxical." It may be questioned whether publicity should form an essential part of the definition; it seems, however, to be involved, or the prostitute cannot obtain clients. Reuss states that she must, in addition, be absolutely without means of subsistence; that is certainly not essential. Nor is it necessary, as the *Digest* insisted, that the act should be performed "without pleasure"; that may be as it will, without affecting the prostitutional nature of the act. But it is essential that the act should be habitually performed with "various persons."

habitually or intermittently has sexual relations more or less promiscuously for money or other mercenary considerations." [1]

It is not altogether easy to explain the origin of the systematized professional prostitution with the existence of which we are familiar in civilization. The amateur kind of prostitution which has sometimes been noted among primitive peoples—the fact, that is, that a man may give a woman a present in seeking to persuade her to allow him to have intercourse with her—is really not prostitution as we understand it. The present in such a case is merely part of a kind of courtship leading to a temporary relationship. The woman more or less retains her social position and is not forced to make a vocation of selling herself because henceforth no other career is open to her. When Cook came to New Zealand his men found that the women were not impregnable, " but the terms and manner of compliance were as decent as those in marriage among us," and according " to their notions the agreement was as innocent." The consent of the woman's friends was necessary, and when the preliminaries were settled it was also necessary to treat this " Juliet of a night " with " the same delicacy as is here required with the wife for life, and the lover who presumed to take any liberties by which this was violated was sure to be disappointed." In some of the Melanesian Islands, it is said, by Codrington, that women would sometimes become prostitutes, or on account of their bad conduct be forced to become prostitutes for a time ; they were not, however, particularly despised, and when they had in this way accumulated a certain amount of property they could marry well, after which it would not be proper to refer to their former career. The repression of sexual intimacies outside marriage is a phenomenon of civilization, but it is not itself by any means a measure of a people's general level, and may, therefore, begin to appear at an early period. But it is important to remember that the primitive and rudimentary forms of prostitution, when they occur, are merely temporary, and frequently—though not invariably—involve no degrading influence on the woman in public estimation, sometimes indeed increasing her value as a wife. The woman who sells herself for money purely as a professional matter, without any thought of love or passion, and who, by virtue of her profession, belongs to a pariah class definitely and rigidly excluded from the main body of her sex, is a phenomenon which can seldom be found except in developed civilization. It is altogether incorrect to speak of prostitution as a survival from primitive times.

On the whole, while among savages sexual relationships are often free before marriage, as well as on the occasion of special festivals, they are rarely truly promiscuous and still more rarely venal. When

[1] See also the article, " Prostitution," by Samuel Putnam in the *Encyclopædia Sexualis*.

savage women nowadays sell themselves, or are sold by their husbands, it has usually been found that we are concerned with the contamination of European civilization.

The definite ways in which professional prostitution may arise are no doubt many. We may assent to the general principle, laid down by Schurtz, that whenever the free union of young people is impeded under conditions in which early marriage is also difficult prostitution must arise. There are, however, different ways in which this principle may take shape. So far as our Western civilization is concerned—the civilization, that is to say, which had its cradle in the Mediterranean basin—it would seem that the origin of prostitution is to be found primarily in a religious custom, religion, the great conserver of social traditions, preserving in a transformed shape a primitive freedom that was passing out of general social life.[1] The typical example is that recorded by Herodotus, in the fifth century before Christ, at the temple of Mylitta, the Babylonian Venus, where every woman once in her life had to come and give herself to the first stranger who threw a coin in her lap, in worship of the goddess. The money could not be refused, however small the amount, but it was given as an offertory to the temple, and the woman, having followed the man and thus made oblation to Mylitta, returned home and lived chastely ever afterwards.[2] Similar customs existed in other parts of Western Asia, in North Africa, in Cyprus and other islands of the Eastern Mediterranean, and also in Greece, where the Temple of Aphrodite at Corinth possessed over a thousand hierodules, dedicated to the service of the goddess, from time to time, as Strabo states, being such as desired to make thank-offering for mercies vouchsafed to them. Pindar refers to the hospitable young Corinthian women

[1] Whatever the reason may be, there can be no doubt that there is a widespread tendency for religion and prostitution to be associated. Thus A. B. Ellis, in his book on *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of West Africa*, states that here women dedicated to a god become promiscuous prostitutes. W. G. Sumner (*Folkways*, Ch. XVI) brings together many facts concerning the wide distribution of religious prostitution.

[2] Herodotus, Bk. I, Ch. CXCIX. Modern scholars confirm the statements of Herodotus from the study of Babylonian literature, though inclined to deny that religious prostitution occupied so large a place as he gives it. A tablet of the Gilgamash epic, according to Morris Jastrow, refers to prostitutes as attendants of the goddess Ishtar in the city Urak (or Erech), which was thus a centre, and perhaps the chief centre, of the rites described by Herodotus (Morris Jastrow, *The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 475). Ishtar was the goddess of fertility, the great mother goddess, and the prostitutes were priestesses, attached to her worship, who took part in ceremonies intended to symbolize fertility. These priestesses of Ishtar were known by the general name Kadishtu, "the holy ones." Religious prostitution is discussed by, among other writers, J. G. Frazer, *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*; Hartland, *Ritual and Belief*, and Iwan Bloch, *Die Prostitution*, Bd. I, pp. 70 *et seq.*

ministrants whose thoughts often turn towards Urania Aphrodite,[1] in whose temple they burned incense; and Athenæus mentions the importance that was attached to the prayers of the Corinthian prostitutes in any national calamity.

We seem here to be in the presence, not merely of a religiously preserved survival of a greater sexual freedom formerly existing,[2] but of a specialized and ritualized development of that primitive cult of the generative forces of Nature which involves the belief that all natural fruitfulness is associated with, and promoted by, acts of human sexual intercourse which thus acquire a religious significance. At a later stage acts of sexual intercourse having a religious significance become specialized and localized in temples, and by a rational transition of ideas it becomes believed that such acts of sexual intercourse in the service of the god, or with persons devoted to the god's service, brought benefits to the individual who performed them, more especially, if a woman, by insuring her fertility. Among primitive peoples generally this conception is embodied mainly in seasonal festivals, but among the peoples of Western Asia who had ceased to be primitive and among whom traditional priestly and hieratic influences had acquired great influence, the earlier generative cult had thus, it seems probable, naturally changed its form in becoming attached to the temples.

At a later period, in Corinth, prostitutes were still the priestesses of Venus, more or less loosely attached to her temples, and so long as that was the case they enjoyed a considerable degree of esteem. At this stage, however, we realize that religious prostitution was developing a utilitarian side. These temples flourished chiefly in sea-coast towns, in islands, in large cities to which many strangers and sailors came. The priestesses of Cyprus burnt incense on her altars and invoked her sacred aid, but at the same time Pindar addresses them as "young girls who welcome all strangers and give them hospitality." Side by side with the religious significance of

[1] It is usual among modern writers to associate Aphrodite Pandemos, rather than Urania, with venal or promiscuous sexuality, but this is a mistake, for the Aphrodite Pandemos was purely political and had no sexual significance. The mistake was introduced, perhaps intentionally, by Plato. It has been suggested that that arch-juggler, who disliked democratic ideas, purposely sought to pervert and vulgarize the conception of Aphrodite Pandemos (Farnell, *Cults of Greek States*, vol. ii, p. 660).

[2] I do not say an earlier "promiscuity," for the theory of a primitive sexual promiscuity is now widely discredited, though no doubt the early prevalence of mother-right was more favourable to the sexual freedom of women than the later patriarchal system. Thus in early Egyptian days a woman could give her favours to any man she chose by sending him her garment, even if she were married. In time the growth of the rights of men led to this being regarded as criminal, but the priestesses of Amen retained the privilege to the last, as being under divine protection (Flinders Petrie, *Egyptian Tales*, pp. 10. 48).

the act of generation the needs of men far from home were already beginning to be definitely recognized. The Babylonian woman had gone to the temple of Mylitta to fulfil a personal religious duty; the Corinthian priestess had begun to act as an avowed minister to the sexual needs of men in strange cities.

The custom which Herodotus noted in Lydia of young girls prostituting themselves in order to acquire a marriage portion which they may dispose of as they think fit (Bk. I, Ch. 93) may well have developed (as Frazer also believes) out of religious prostitution; we can indeed trace its evolution in Cyprus, where eventually, at the period when Justinian visited the island, the money given by strangers to the women was no longer placed on the altar but put into a chest to form marriage-portions for them. It is a custom to be found in Japan and various other parts of the world, as among the Ouled-Nail of Algeria,[1] and is not necessarily always based on religious prostitution; but it obviously cannot exist except among peoples who see nothing derogatory in free sexual intercourse for the purpose of obtaining money, so that the custom of Mylitta furnished a natural basis for it.

As a more ascetic conception of religion developed, and as the growth of civilization tended to deprive sexual intercourse of its sacred halo, religious prostitution in Greece was slowly abolished, though on the coasts of Asia Minor both religious prostitution and prostitution for the purpose of obtaining a marriage portion persisted to the time of Constantine, who put an end to these ancient customs.[2] Superstition was on the side of the old religious prostitution; it was believed that women who had never sacrificed to Aphrodite became consumed by lust, and according to the legend recorded by Ovid—a legend which seems to point to a certain antagonism between sacred and secular prostitution—this was the case with the women who first became public prostitutes. The decay of religious prostitution, doubtless combined with the cravings always born of the growth of civilization, led up to the first establishment, attributed by legend to Solon, of a public brothel, a purely secular establishment for a purely secular end: the safeguarding of the virtue of the general population and increasing the public revenue. With that institution the evolution of prostitution, and of the modern marriage system of which it forms part, was completed. The Athenian *dikterion* is the modern brothel;

[1] The girls of this tribe, who are remarkably pretty, after spending two or three years in thus amassing a little dowry, return home to marry, and are said to make model wives and mothers.

[2] At Tralles, in Lydia, even in the second century, A.D., as Sir W. M. Ramsay notes (*Cities of Phrygia*, vol. i, pp. 94, 115) sacred prostitution was still an honourable practice for women of good birth who "felt themselves called upon to live the divine life under the influence of divine inspiration."

the *dikteriade* is the modern state-regulated prostitute. The free *hetairæ*, indeed, subsequently arose, educated women having no taint of the *dikterion*, but they likewise had no official part in public worship. The primitive conception of the sanctity of sexual intercourse in divine service had been utterly lost.

The history of European prostitution, as of so many other modern institutions, may properly be said to begin in Rome.[1] Here at the outset we already find that inconsistently mixed attitude towards prostitution which to-day is still preserved. In Greece it was in many respects different. Greece was nearer to the days of religious prostitution, and the sincerity and refinement of Greek civilization made it possible for the better kind of prostitute to exert, and often be worthy to exert, an influence in all departments of life which she has never been able to exercise since in Europe, except occasionally, in a slighter degree, in France. The coarse, vigorous, practical Roman was quite ready to tolerate the prostitute, but he was not prepared to carry that toleration to its logical results ; he never felt bound to harmonize inconsistent facts of life. Cicero, a moralist of no mean order, without expressing approval of prostitution, yet could not understand how anyone should wish to prohibit youths from commerce with prostitutes, such severity being out of harmony with all the customs of the past or the present. But the superior class of Roman prostitutes, the *bonæ mulieres*, had no such dignified position as the Greek *hetairæ*. Their influence was indeed immense, but it was confined, as it is in the case of their European successors to-day, to fashions, customs, and arts. There was always a certain moral rigidity in the Roman which prevented him from yielding far in this direction. He encouraged brothels, but he only entered them with covered head and face concealed in his cloak. In the same way, while he tolerated the prostitute, beyond a certain point he sharply curtailed her privileges. Not only was she deprived of all influence in the higher concerns of life, but she might not even wear the *vitta* or the *stola ;* she could indeed go almost naked if she pleased, but she must not ape the emblems of the respectable Roman matron.

The rise of Christianity to political power produced on the whole less change of policy than might have been anticipated. The Christian rulers had to deal practically as best they might with a mixed, turbulent, and semi-pagan world. The leading fathers of the Church were inclined to tolerate prostitution for the avoidance of greater evils, and Christian emperors, like their pagan predecessors, were

[1] Among the ancient Hebrews prostitution, according to Preuss, was rare, and when found the prostitute was usually a stranger, especially Syrian or Egyptian (Syria and Egypt were in ancient times popularly considered the great seats of wantonness). The Jews were indeed entirely opposed to asceticism, but never regarded women as mere instruments of pleasure.

willing to derive a tax from prostitution. The right of prostitution to exist was, however, no longer so unquestionably recognized as in pagan days, and from time to time some vigorous ruler sought to repress prostitution by severe enactments. The younger Theodosius and Valentinian definitely ordained that there should be no more brothels and that anyone giving shelter to a prostitute should be punished. Justinian confirmed that measure and ordered that all panders were to be exiled on pain of death. These enactments were quite vain. But during a thousand years they were repeated again and again in various parts of Europe, and invariably with the same fruitless or worse than fruitless results. Theodoric, king of the Visigoths, punished with death those who promoted prostitution, and Recared, a Catholic king of the same people in the sixth century, prohibited prostitution altogether and ordered that a prostitute, when found, should receive three hundred strokes of the whip and be driven out of the city. Charlemagne and later Frederick Barbarossa, made severe laws against prostitution which were all of no effect, for even if they seemed to be effective for the time the reaction was all the greater afterwards.

It is in France that the most persistent efforts have been made to combat prostitution. Most notable of all were the efforts of the King and Saint, Louis IX. In 1254 St. Louis ordained that prostitutes should be driven out altogether and deprived of all their money and goods, even to their mantles and gowns. In 1256 he repeated this ordinance and in 1269, before setting out for the Crusades, he ordered the destruction of all places of prostitution. The repetition of those decrees shows how ineffectual they were. They even made matters worse, for prostitutes were forced to mingle with the general population, and their influence was thus extended. St. Louis was unable to put down prostitution even in his own camp in the East, and it existed outside his own tent. His legislation, however, was frequently imitated by subsequent rulers of France, even to the middle of the seventeenth century, always with the same ineffectual and worse results. In 1560 an edict of Charles IX abolished brothels, but the number of prostitutes was thereby increased rather than diminished, while many new kinds of brothels appeared in unsuspected shapes and were more dangerous than the more recognized brothels which had been suppressed. In spite of all such legislation, or because of it, there has been no country in which prostitution has played a more conspicuous part.

The last vigorous attempt to uproot prostitution in Europe was that of Maria Theresa at Vienna in the middle of the eighteenth century. Although of such recent date it may be mentioned here because it was medieval alike in its conception and methods. Its object, indeed, was to suppress not only prostitution but fornication

generally, and the means adopted were fines, imprisonment, whipping, and torture. The supposed causes of fornication were also dealt with severely; short dresses were prohibited; billiard rooms and cafés were inspected; no waitresses were allowed, and, when discovered, a waitress was liable to be handcuffed and carried off by the police. The Chastity Commission, under which these measures were rigorously carried out, was, apparently, established in 1751 and was quietly abolished by the Emperor Joseph II, in the early years of his reign. It was the general opinion that this severe legislation caused much more serious evils than it cured. It is certain in any case that, in modern times, illegitimacy has been more prevalent in Vienna than in any other great European capital.

Yet the attitude towards prostitutes was always mixed and inconsistent at different places or different times, or even at the same time and place. Dufour aptly compared their position to that of the medieval Jews; they were continually persecuted, ecclesiastically, civilly, and socially, yet all classes were glad to have recourse to them and it was impossible to do without them. In some countries, including England in the fourteenth century, a special costume was imposed on prostitutes as a mark of infamy. Yet in many respects no infamy whatever attached to prostitution. High-placed officials could claim payment of the expenses incurred in visiting prostitutes when travelling on public business. Prostitution sometimes played an official part in festivities and receptions accorded by great cities to royal guests, and the brothel might form an important part of the city's hospitality. When the Emperor Sigismund came to Ulm in 1434 the streets were illuminated at such times as he or his suite desired to visit the common brothel. Brothels under municipal protection are found in the thirteenth century in Augsburg, in Vienna, in Hamburg. In France the best known *abbayes* of prostitutes were those of Toulouse and Montpellier. Durkheim was of opinion that in the early middle ages, before this period, free love and marriage were less severely differentiated. It was the rise of the middle class, he considers, anxious to protect their wives and daughters, which led to a regulated and publicly recognized attempt to direct debauchery into a separate channel, brought under control. The brothels constituted a kind of public service, the directors of them being regarded almost as public officials, bound to keep a certain number of prostitutes, to charge according to a fixed tariff, and not to receive into their houses girls belonging to the neighbourhood. Institutions of this kind lasted for three centuries. It was, in part, perhaps, the impetus of the new Protestant movement, but mainly the terrible devastation produced by the introduction of syphilis at the end of the fifteenth century which, as Burckhardt, Bloch, and others have pointed out, led to the decline of the medieval brothels.

The superior modern prostitute, the "courtesan" who had no connection with the brothel, was the outcome of the Renaissance and made her appearance in Italy at the end of the fifteenth century. She especially flourished in Venice, where she sometimes attained a high degree of culture and refinement. "Courtesan" or "cortegiana" meant a lady following the court, and the term began at this time to be applied to a superior prostitute observing a certain degree of decorum and restraint. In the papal court of Alexander Borgia the courtesan flourished even when her conduct was not altogether dignified. Burchard, the faithful and unimpeachable chronicler of this court, describes in his diary how, one evening, in October, 1601, the Pope sent for fifty courtesans to be brought to his chamber; after supper, in the presence of Cæsar Borgia and his young sister Lucrezia, they danced with the servitors and others who were present, at first clothed, afterwards naked. The candlesticks with lighted candles were then placed upon the floor and chestnuts thrown among them, to be gathered by the women crawling between the candlesticks on their hands and feet. Finally, a number of prizes were brought forth to be awarded to those men "qui pluries dictos meretrices carnaliter agnoscerent," the victor in the contest being decided according to the judgment of the spectators. This scene, enacted publicly in the Apostolic palace and serenely set forth by the impartial secretary, is at once a notable episode in the history of modern prostitution and one of the most illuminating illustrations we possess of the paganism of the Renaissance.

Before the term "courtesan" came into repute, prostitutes were even in Italy commonly called "sinners," *peccatrice*. The change, Grag remarks in a very interesting study of the Renaissance prostitute (in *Attraverso il Cinquecento*), "reveals a profound alteration in ideas and in life"; a term that suggested infamy gave place to one that suggested approval, and even honour, for the courts of the Renaissance period represented the finest culture of the time. The best of these courtesans seem to have been not altogether unworthy of the honour they received. We can detect this in their letters, especially those of Camilla de Pisa which are marked by genuine passion. The famous Imperia, called by a Pope in the early years of the sixteenth century "nobilissimum Romæ scortum," knew Latin and could write Italian verse. Other courtesans knew Italian and Latin poetry by heart, while they were accomplished in music, dancing, and speech. We are reminded of ancient Greece for the Renaissance courtesans resembled the hetairæ, especially in culture and influence, though with some differences due to the antagonism between religion and prostitution at the later period.

Perhaps the most typical example of the Renaissance courtesan at her best is furnished by Veronica Franco, born in 1546 at Venice,

of middle-class family and in early life married to a doctor. Of her also it has been said that, while by profession a prostitute, she was by inclination a poet. But she appears to have been well content with her profession, and never ashamed of it. Her life and character have been studied by Arturo Graf, and more slightly in a little book by Tassini. She was highly cultured, and knew several languages; she also sang well and played on many instruments. In one of her letters she advises a youth who was madly in love with her that if he wishes to obtain her favours he must leave off importuning her and devote himself tranquilly to study. "You know well," she adds, "that all those who claim to be able to gain my love, and who are extremely dear to me, are strenuous in studious discipline. . . . If my fortune allowed it I would spend all my time quietly in the academies of virtuous men." The Diotimas and Aspasias of antiquity, as Graf comments, would not have demanded so much of their lovers. In her poems it is possible to trace some of her love histories, and she often shows herself torn by jealousy at the thought that perhaps another woman may approach her beloved. Once she fell in love with an ecclesiastic, possibly a bishop, with whom she had no relationships, and after a long absence, which healed her love, she and he became sincere friends. Once she was visited by Henry III of France, who took away her portrait, while on her part she promised to dedicate a book to him; she so far fulfilled this as to address some sonnets to him and a letter. When Montaigne passed through Venice she sent him a little book of hers, as we learn from his *Journal*, though they do not appear to have met. Tintoret was one of her many distinguished friends, and she was a strenuous advocate of the high qualities of modern as compared with ancient art. Her friendships were affectionate, and she seems to have had various grand ladies among her friends. She was, however, so far from being ashamed of her profession of courtesan that in one of her poems she affirms she has been taught by Apollo other arts besides those he is usually regarded as teaching. In 1580 (when not more than thirty-four) Veronica confessed to the Holy Office that she had had six children. In the same year she formed the design of founding a Home, where prostitutes who wished to abandon their mode of life could find a refuge with their children, if they had any. In 1591 she died of fever, reconciled with God and blessed by many unfortunates. Even in sixteenth-century Venice, however, Veronica Franco seems to have been not altogether at peace in the career of a courtesan. She was clearly not adapted for ordinary marriage, yet under the most favourable conditions that the modern world offered it may still be doubted whether a prostitute's career could supply complete satisfaction to a woman of large heart and brain.

The frank acceptance of prostitution by the spiritual or even the

temporal power has since the Renaissance become more and more exceptional. The opposite extreme of attempting to uproot prostitution has also in practice been altogether abandoned. Sporadic attempts have indeed been made, here and there, to put down prostitution with a strong hand even in quite modern times. It is now, however, realized that in such a case the remedy is worse than the disease.

In 1860 a Mayor of Portsmouth felt it his duty to attempt to suppress prostitution. There was an order passed that every beerhouse-keeper and licensed victualler in the borough known to harbour these women would be dealt with, and probably lose his licence. On a given day about three hundred or four hundred of these forlorn outcasts were bundled wholesale into the streets, and they formed up in a large body, many of them with only a shift and a petticoat on, and with drunken men and boys, a fife and a fiddle, they paraded the streets for several days. They marched in a body to the workhouse, but were refused admittance. After they had wandered about for two or three days shelterless, it was felt that the remedy was much worse than the disease, and they were allowed to go back to their former places.

Similar experiments have been made even more recently in America. In Pittsburg, in 1891, the houses of prostitutes were closed, the inmates turned out upon the streets and refused lodging and even food by the citizens. A wave of popular remonstrance, all over the country, at this outrage on humanity, created a reaction which resulted in a last condition by no means better than the first. In the same year also a similar incident occurred in New York with the same results.

There grew up instead the tendency to regulate prostitution, to give it a semi-official toleration which enabled the authorities to exercise control over it, and to guard as far as possible against its evils by medical and police inspection. The new system differed from the ancient medieval attitude to prostitution in important respects; it involved a routine of medical inspection and it endeavoured to suppress any rivalry by unlicensed prostitutes outside. Bernard Mandeville, the author of the *Fable of the Bees*, and an acute thinker, was a pioneer in the advocacy of this system. In 1724, in his *Modest Defense of Publick Stews*, he argued that "the encouraging of public whoring will not only prevent most of the mischievous effects of this vice, but even lessen the quantity of whoring in general, and reduce it in the narrowest bounds which it can possibly be contained in." He proposed to discourage private prostitution by giving special privileges and immunities to brothels by Act of Parliament. His scheme involved the erection of one hundred brothels in a special quarter of the city, to contain two thousand prostitutes and one

hundred matrons of ability and experience with physicians and surgeons, as well as commissioners to oversee the whole. Mandeville was regarded merely as a cynic or worse, and his scheme was ignored or treated with contempt. It was left to Napoleon, eighty years later, to establish the system of "maisons de tolérance," which had so great an influence over European practice during a large part of the last century and even still in its numerous survivals forms the subject of widely divergent opinions.

On the whole, however, it must be said that the system of registering, examining, and regularizing prostitutes now belongs to the past. Many great battles have been fought over this question; the most important is that which raged for many years in England over the Contagious Diseases Acts, and is embodied in the 600 pages of a Report by a Select Committee on these Acts issued in 1882. The majority of the members of the Committee reported favourably to the Acts which were, notwithstanding, repealed in 1886, since which date no serious attempt has been made in England to establish them again. In Continental Europe the northern countries have pioneered in abolishing the old system, and in the United States municipal regulation of prostitution is generally regarded as neither successful nor desirable.

Although the old system still stands in many countries with the inert stolidity of established institutions, it no longer commands general approval. As Paul and Victor Margueritte long since stated, in the course of an acute examination of the phenomena of state-regulated prostitution as found in Paris, the system is "barbarous to start with and almost inefficacious as well." The expert is every day more clearly demonstrating its inefficacy while the psychologist and the sociologist are constantly becoming more convinced that it is barbarous.

It can indeed by no means be said that unanimity has been attained. It is obviously so necessary to combat the flood of disease and misery which proceeds directly from the spread of syphilis and gonorrhœa, and indirectly from the prostitution which is the chief propagator of these diseases, that we cannot be surprised that many should eagerly catch at any system which seems to promise a palliation of the evils. At the present time, however, it is those best acquainted with the operation of the system of control who have most clearly realized that the supposed palliation is for the most part illusory, and in any case attained at the cost of the artificial production of other evils.

Even the most ardent advocates of the registration of prostitutes recognize that not only is the tendency of civilization opposed rather than favourable, but that in the numerous countries where the system persists registered prostitutes are losing ground in the struggle against clandestine prostitutes. Even in France, the classic land of police-

controlled prostitutes, the "maisons de tolérance" have long been steadily decreasing in number, by no means because prostitution is decreasing but because low-class *brasseries* and small *cafés-chantants*, which are really unlicensed brothels, are taking their place.

The wholesale regularization of prostitution in civilized centres is nowadays, indeed, advocated by few, if any, of the authorities who belong to the newer school. It is at most claimed as desirable in certain places under special circumstances. Even those who would still be glad to see prostitution thoroughly in the control of the police now recognize that experience shows this to be impossible. As many girls begin their career as prostitutes at a very early age, a sound system of regulation should be prepared to enroll as permanent prostitutes even girls who are little more than children. That, however, is a logical conclusion against which the moral sense, and even the common sense, of a community instinctively revolts. Moreover, whenever she becomes diseased, or grows tired of her position, the registered woman may always slip out of the hands of the police and establish herself elsewhere as a clandestine prostitute. Every rigid attempt to keep prostitution within the police ring leads to offensive interference with the actions and the freedom of respectable women which cannot fail to be intolerable in any free community. Even in a city like London, where prostitution is relatively free, the supervision of the police has led to scandalous charges against women who have done nothing whatever which should legitimately arouse suspicion of their behaviour.[1] The escape of the infected woman from the police cordon has, it is obvious, an effect in raising the apparent level of health of registered women, and the police statistics are still further fallaciously improved by the fact that the inmates of brothels are older on the average than clandestine prostitutes and have become immune to disease. These facts are now becoming fairly obvious and well recognized. The State regulation of prostitution is undesirable, on moral grounds for the oft-emphasized reason that it is only applied to one sex, and on practical grounds because it is ineffective. Society allows the police to harass the prostitute with petty persecutions

[1] The British legal treatment of prostitutes is still very unsatisfactory, and often leads to injustice. It is based on laws, altogether obsolete and now widely condemned, dating back to 1824, 1839, and 1847. They are directed against any woman whom the police may regard as a "common prostitute," on often quite inadequate grounds, and she usually pleads "guilty" and pays the fine imposed to avoid further unpleasantness, but thereby stamps herself for the future. The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene has long been urging on the Government the necessity of repealing the whole of the present legislation dealing with solicitation by common prostitutes and substituting an equal law, applicable to both sexes, against all forms of molestation or annoyance in streets and public places. This Association's Report for 1935–6 brings out the disturbing fact that in the London Metropolitan area there has been, since 1934, an enormous rise in the number of arrests of "prostitutes" who are convicted on "the most perfunctory and artificial evidence of alleged annoyance."

under the guise of charges of "solicitation," "disorderly conduct," etc., but it is no longer convinced that she ought to be under the absolute control of the police.

The problem of prostitution, when we look at it narrowly, seems to be in the same position to-day as at any time in the course of the past three thousand years. In order, however, to comprehend the real significance of prostitution, and to attain a reasonable attitude towards it, we must look at it from a broader point of view; we must consider not only its evolution and history, but its causes and its relation to the wider aspects of modern social life. When we thus view the problem from a broader standpoint we shall find that there is no conflict between the claims of ethics and those of social hygiene, and that the co-ordinated activity of both is involved in the progressive refinement and purification of civilized sexual relationships.

## III. The Causes of Prostitution

The history of the rise and development of prostitution enables us to see that prostitution is not an accident of our marriage system, but an essential constituent. The gradual development of the family on a patriarchal and largely monogamic basis rendered it more and more difficult for a woman to dispose of her own person. She belongs in the first place to her father, whose interest it was to guard her carefully until a husband appeared who could afford to secure her. In the enhancement of her value the new idea of the market value of virginity gradually developed, and while a "virgin" had previously meant a woman who was free to do as she would with her own body its meaning was now reversed and it came to mean a woman who was precluded from having intercourse with men. When she was transferred from her father to a husband, she was still guarded with the same care; husband and father alike found their interest in preserving the chastity of their women. This situation resulted in the existence of a large body of young men not yet rich enough to obtain wives, and a large number of young women not yet chosen as wives, and many of whom could never expect to become wives. At such a point in social evolution prostitution is clearly inevitable; it is not so much the indispensable concomitant of marriage as an essential part of the whole system. Some of the superfluous or neglected women, utilizing their money value, find their social function in selling their favours to gratify the temporary desires of the men who have not yet been able to acquire wives. Thus every link in the chain of the marriage system is firmly welded and the complete circle formed.

But while the history of the rise of prostitution shows how essential an element prostitution is of the marriage system which has long prevailed in Europe—under varied racial, political, social, and religious conditions—it yet fails to supply us in every respect with the data

necessary to reach a definite attitude towards prostitution to-day. In order to understand the place of prostitution in our existing system, it is necessary that we should analyse the chief factors of prostitution. We may conveniently learn to understand these if we consider prostitution under four aspects. These are: (1) *economic* necessity; (2) *biological* predisposition; (3) *moral* advantages; and (4) what may be called *civilizational* value.

While these four factors seem those that chiefly concern us, it is scarcely necessary to point out that other causes contribute to produce and modify prostitution. Prostitutes themselves often seek to lead other girls to adopt the same path; recruits must be found for brothels, whence we have the "white slave trade," which is now being energetically combated in many parts of the world; while all the forms of seduction towards this life are favoured and often predisposed to by alcoholism. It will generally be found that several causes have combined to push a girl into the career of prostitution.

There is some interest in considering the reason assigned for prostitutes entering their career. In some countries this has been estimated by those who come into close official or other contact with prostitutes. In other countries, it is the rule for girls, before they are registered as prostitutes, to state the reasons for which they desire to enter the career. Parent-Duchâtelet, whose work on prostitutes in Paris was the first authoritative study, presented the earliest estimate of this kind. He found that over 5,000 prostitutes, about 25 per cent., attributed their entry into this life to each of three causes: poverty, seduction, and loss of parents or other source of home support; so that about 75 per cent. would come under economic causation. In Brussels, later in the century, while nearly 50 per cent. prostitutes assigned the convenient cause of poverty, a third confessed that it was sexual passion. In London, also, Merrick, chaplain of Millbank Prison, found that, of over 16,000 prostitutes who passed through his hands, one-third stated that they had voluntarily left home or situations for a "life of pleasure," and only one-fifth assigned poverty as a cause. Logan, an English city missionary, found that one-fourth were servant girls who had given up their places. In New York Sanger found that 25 per cent. assigned "destitution" as the cause, and an equal percentage gave "inclination," while, also in America, Woods Hutchinson, summarizing various reports, put down 42 per cent. to "love of display, luxury, and idleness." In Italy, among 10,000 prostitutes, "vice and depravity" were put at the head of the causes, and "death of relatives" came second. In Tsarist Russia "insufficient wages" was the first cause assigned, and "desire for amusement" came next. Nearly all these investigations belong to the last century. Somewhat more recent inquiries are in the same sense. Mrs. Bramwell Booth, a competent

and sympathetic investigator, found among 150 successive and varied prostitutes only 2 per cent. who accounted for their lives by inability to earn any other livelihood. Pinkus, in Berlin, studying the previous earnings of over 1,500 prostitutes, found that some 1,400 had earned enough for self-support. Dr. Katharine Davis, in her careful and detailed study of prostitutes at the New York State Reformatory (included in Kneeland's *Commercialized Prostitution in New York City*), found that 671 different reasons were assigned by the girls for taking up this life, but she was surprised that few gave any directly economic reasons; though that might seem the excuse most ready to hand; only nineteen assigned it. As, however, Flexner points out, the indirect economic factor would still be important by the frequently tedious, excessive, or uncongenial nature of the employments which were abandoned for "a life of pleasure."

1. *The Economic Causation of Prostitution.* Writers on prostitution frequently assert that economic conditions lie at the root of prostitution and that its chief cause is poverty, while prostitutes themselves often declare that the difficulty of earning a livelihood in other ways was a main cause in inducing them to adopt this career. "Of all the causes of prostitution," Parent-Duchâtelet wrote, "particularly in Paris, and probably in all large cities, none is more active than lack of work and the misery which is the inevitable result of insufficient wages." In England, also, to a large extent, Sherwell states, "morals fluctuate with trade." It is equally so in Berlin where the number of registered prostitutes increases during bad years. It is so also in America. It is the same in Japan; "the cause of causes is poverty."

Thus the broad and general statement that prostitution is largely or mainly an economic phenomenon, due to the low wages of women or to sudden depressions in trade, is everywhere made by investigators. It must, however, be added that these general statements are considerably qualified in the light of the detailed investigations made by careful inquirers. Thus Ströhmberg, who minutely investigated 462 prostitutes, found that only one assigned destitution as the reason for adopting her career, and on investigation this was found to be an impudent lie. Hammer found that of ninety registered German prostitutes not one had entered on the career out of want or to support a child, while some went on the street while in the possession of money, or without wishing to be paid. Pastor Buschmann, of the Teltow Magdalene Home in Berlin, finds that it is not want but indifference to moral considerations which led girls to become prostitutes. In Germany, before a girl is put on the police register, due care is always taken to give her a chance of entering a Home and getting work; in Berlin, in the course of ten years, only two girls—out of thousands—were willing to take advantage of this opportunity. The difficulty experienced by English Rescue Homes in finding girls who are willing

to be "rescued" is notorious. The same difficulty is found in other cities, even where entirely different conditions prevail; thus it was found in Madrid, according to Bernaldo de Quiros and Llanas Aguilaniedo, that the prostitutes who enter the Homes, notwithstanding all the devotion of the nuns, on leaving at once return to their old life. While the economic factor in prostitution undoubtedly exists, the undue frequency and emphasis with which it is put forward and accepted is clearly due, in part to ignorance of the real facts, in part to the fact that such an assumption appeals to those whose weakness it is to explain all social phenomena by economic causes, and in part to its obvious plausibility.

Prostitutes are mainly recruited from the ranks of factory girls, domestic servants, shop girls, and waitresses. In some of these occupations it is difficult to obtain employment all the year round. In this way many milliners, dressmakers, and tailoresses become prostitutes when business is slack, and return to business when the season begins. Sometimes the regular work of the day is supplemented concurrently by prostitution in the street in the evening. It is said that amateur prostitution of this kind is prevalent in England, as it is not checked by the precautions which, in countries where prostitution is regulated, the clandestine prostitute must adopt in order to avoid registration. Certain public lavatories and dressing-rooms in central London are said to be used by the girls for putting on, and finally washing off before going home, the customary paint. It is certain that in England a large proportion of parents belonging to the working and even lower middle class ranks are unacquainted with the nature of the lives led by their own daughters. It must be added, also, that occasionally this conduct of the daughter is winked at or encouraged by the parents; thus a correspondent writes that he "knows some towns in England where prostitution is not regarded as anything disgraceful, and can remember many cases where the mother's house has been used by the daughter with the mother's knowledge."

Acton, in a book on London prostitution, written in the middle of the last century, said that prostitution is "a transitory stage, through which an untold number of British women are ever on their passage." This statement was strenuously denied at the time by many earnest moralists who refused to admit that it was possible for a woman who has sunk into so deep a pit of degradation ever to climb out again, respectably safe and sound. Yet it is certainly true as regards a considerable proportion of women, not only in England, but in other countries also. Thus Parent-Duchâtelet stated that "prostitution is for the majority only a transitory stage; it is quitted usually during the first year; very few prostitutes continue until extinction." It is difficult, however, to ascertain precisely of how large a proportion this is true; there are no data which would serve as a basis for exact

estimation, and it is impossible to expect that respectable married women would admit that they had ever been " on the streets " ; they would not, perhaps, always admit it even to themselves.[1]

It must always be remembered, for it is sometimes forgotten by socialists and social reformers, that while the pressure of poverty exerts a markedly modifying influence in prostitution, in that it increases the ranks of the women who thereby seek a livelihood and may thus be properly regarded as a factor of prostitution, no practicable raising of the rate of women's wages could possibly serve, directly and alone, to abolish prostitution. De Molinari, an economist, after remarking that " prostitution is an industry " and that if other competing industries can offer women sufficiently high pecuniary inducements they will not be so frequently attracted to prostitution, proceeds to point out that that by no means settles the question. " Like every other industry prostitution is governed by the demand of the need to which it responds. As long as that need and that demand persist, they will provoke an offer. It is the need and the demand that we must act on, and perhaps science will furnish us the means to do so." In what way Molinari expected science to diminish the demand for prostitutes, however, is not clearly brought out.

Not only have we to admit that no practicable rise in the rate of wages to women in ordinary industries can possibly compete with the wages which fairly attractive women of quite ordinary ability can earn by prostitution, but we have also to realize that a rise in general prosperity—which alone can render a rise of women's wages healthy and normal—involves a rise in the wages of prostitution, and an increase in the number of prostitutes. So that if good wages is to be regarded as the antagonist of prostitution, we can only say that it more than gives back with one hand what it takes with the other. To so marked a degree is this the case that Després, in a detailed moral and demographic study of the distribution of prostitution in France, came to the conclusion that we must reverse the ancient doctrine that " poverty engenders prostitution " since prostitution regularly increases with wealth, and as a *département* rises in wealth

1 In Lyons, according to Potton, of 3,884 prostitutes, 3,194 abandoned, or apparently abandoned, their profession ; in Paris a very large number became servants, dressmakers, or tailoresses, occupations which, in many cases, doubtless, they had exercised before. Sloggett (quoted by Acton) stated that at Devonport 250 of the 1,775 prostitutes there married. It is well-known that prostitutes occasionally marry extremely well. It was remarked nearly a century ago that marriages of prostitutes to rich men were especially frequent in England, and usually turned out well ; the same seems to be true still. In their own social rank they not infrequently marry cabmen and policemen, the two classes of men with whom they are brought most closely in contact in the streets. As regards Germany, C. K. Schneider stated that young prostitutes take up all sorts of occupations and situations, sometimes, if they have saved a little money, establishing a business, while old prostitutes become procuresses, brothel-keepers, lavatory women, and so on.

and prosperity, so the number both of its inscribed and its free prostitutes rises also. There is indeed a fallacy here, for while it is true, as Després argues, that wealth demands prostitution, it is also true that a wealthy community involves the extreme of poverty as well as of riches and that it is among the poorer elements that prostitution chiefly finds its recruits. The ancient dictum that "poverty engenders prostitution" still stands, but it is complicated and qualified by the complex conditions of civilization. Bonger, in his able discussion of the economic side of the question, realized the wide and deep basis of prostitution when he reached the conclusion that it is "on the one hand the inevitable complement of the existing legal monogamy, and on the other hand the result of the bad conditions in which many young girls grow up, the result of the physical and psychical wretchedness in which the women of the people live, and the consequence also of the inferior position of women in our actual society."[1] A narrowly economic consideration of prostitution can by no means bring us to the root of the matter.

One circumstance alone should have sufficed to indicate that the inability of many women to secure "a living wage" is far from being the most fundamental cause of prostitution; a large proportion of prostitutes everywhere come from the ranks of domestic service. Of all the great groups of female workers, domestic servants are the freest from economic anxieties; they do not pay for food or for lodging; they often live as well as their mistresses, and in a large proportion of cases they have fewer money anxieties than their mistresses. Moreover, they supply an almost universal demand, so that there is never any need for even very moderately competent servants to be in want of work. They constitute, it is true, a very large body which could not fail to supply a certain contingent of recruits to prostitution. But when we see that domestic service is the chief reservoir from which prostitutes are drawn, it should be clear that the craving for food and shelter is by no means the chief cause of prostitution. It must, however, be remembered that as Jane Addams pointed out, it is quite usual for prostitutes to say they have been servants when their periods of such service were far too brief to bring them properly into the class of servants.

It may be added that, although the significance of this predominance of servants among prostitutes is seldom realized by those who fancy that to remove poverty is to abolish prostitution, it has not been ignored by the more thoughtful students of social questions. Thus Sherwell, while pointing out truly that, to a large extent, "morals fluctuate with trade," adds that, against the importance of the economic factor, it is a suggestive fact that the majority of the girls

[1] Bonger, *Criminalité et Conditions Economiques*, 1905.

who frequent the West End of London (88 per cent., according to the Salvation Army's Registers) are drawn from domestic service where the economic struggle is not severely felt.

It is at the same time worthy of note that by the conditions of their lives servants, more than any other class, resemble prostitutes. Like prostitutes, they are a class of women apart; they are not entitled to the considerations and the little courtesies usually paid to other women; in some countries they are even registered, like prostitutes; it is scarcely surprising that when they suffer from so many of the disadvantages of the prostitute, they should sometimes desire to possess also some of her advantages. Lily Braun set forth in detail these unfavourable conditions of domestic labour as they bear on the tendency of servant-girls to become prostitutes. R. de Ryckère, in *La Servante Criminelle,* studied the psychology of the servant-girl. He finds that she is specially marked by lack of foresight, vanity, lack of invention, tendency to imitation, and mobility of mind. These are characters which ally her to the prostitute. Flexner, considering the evidence which shows comparatively little proof of the direct effect of economic pressure in the causation of prostitution, rightly concludes that we may still view it as of economic origin and significance "in so far as the region of economic pressure is mainly the region from which the prostitute comes." I would add that domestic service is by no means likely to be so wide a portal to prostitution in the future as it has been in the past. The girl of the people to-day avoids domestic service, or else prefers to live outside, and so to enjoy a degree of freedom and leisure which greatly diminishes the temptation to a life of prostitution.

2. *The Biological Factor of Prostitution.* Economic considerations, we see, have a highly important influence on prostitution. There is another question which has exercised many investigators: To what extent are prostitutes predestined to this career by organic constitution? It is generally admitted that other conditions are an exciting cause of prostitution; in how far are those who succumb predisposed by the possession of abnormal personal characteristics? Some have argued that this predisposition is so marked that prostitution may fairly be regarded as a feminine equivalent for criminality, and that in a family in which the men instinctively turn to crime, the women instinctively turn to prostitution. Others have as strenuously denied this conclusion.

Lombroso, especially, advocated the doctrine that prostitution is the vicarious equivalent of criminality. In this he was developing the results reached, in the study of the Jukes family by Dugdale, that "there where the brothers commit crime, the sisters adopt prostitution." There is the same lack of moral sense, the same hardness of heart, the same precocious taste for evil, the same

indifference to social infamy, the same volatility, love of idleness, and lack of foresight, the same taste for facile pleasures, for the orgy and for alcohol, the same, or almost the same, vanity. Prostitution is only the feminine side of criminality.

W. Fischer vigorously argued that prostitution is not an inoffensive equivalent of criminality, but a factor of criminality. Féré, again, asserted that criminality and prostitution are not equivalent, but identical. " Prostitutes and criminals," he holds, " have as a common character their unproductiveness, and consequently they are both anti-social." The essential character of criminals is not, however, their unproductiveness, for that they share with a considerable proportion of the wealthiest of the upper classes ; it must be added, also, that the prostitute, unlike the criminal, is exercising an activity for which there is a demand, for which she is willingly paid, and for which she has to work (it has sometimes been noted that the prostitute looks down on the thief, who " does not work ") ; she is carrying on a profession, and is neither more nor less productive than those who carry on many more reputable professions. Aschaffenburg argued somewhat differently that prostitution is not indeed a form of criminality, but too frequently united with criminality to be regarded as an equivalent. Here, however, as usual, there is a wide difference of opinion as to the proportion of prostitutes of whom this is true. It is recognized by all investigators to be true of a certain number, but while Baumgarten, from an examination of 8,000 prostitutes, only found a minute proportion who were criminals, Ströhmberg found that among 462 prostitutes there were as many as 175 thieves. From another side, Morasso, on the strength of his own investigations, protested altogether against any purely degenerative view of prostitutes which would assimilate them with criminals.

The question of the sexuality of prostitutes, which has a certain bearing on the question, has been settled by different writers in different senses. While some, like Morasso, assert that sexual impulse is a main cause inducing women to adopt a prostitute's career, others assert that prostitutes are usually almost devoid of sexual impulse. Many refer to the prevalence of sexual frigidity among prostitutes. In London, Merrick stated that he has met with " only a very few cases " in which gross sexual desire has been the motive to adopt a life of prostitution. In Paris, Raciborski had stated at a much earlier period that " among prostitutes one finds very few who are prompted to libertinage by sexual ardour."[1] Commenge, again, a careful student of the Parisian prostitute, cannot admit that sexual desire is to be

[1] It may be added that Bergh, a leading authority on the anatomical peculiarities of the external female sexual organs, who believed that strong development of the external genital organs accompanies libidinous tendencies, had not found such development to be common among prostitutes.

classed among the serious causes of prostitution. "I have made inquiries of thousands of women on this point," he states, "and only a very small number have told me that they were driven to prostitution for the satisfaction of sexual needs. Although girls who give themselves to prostitution are often lacking in frankness, on this point, I believe, they have no wish to deceive."

There can be no doubt that the statements made regarding the sexual frigidity of prostitutes are often much too unqualified. This is in part due to the fact that they are usually made by those who speak from a knowledge of old prostitutes whose habitual familiarity with normal sexual intercourse in its least attractive aspects has resulted in complete indifference to such intercourse, so far as their clients are concerned.[1] It may be stated with truth that to the woman of deep passions the ephemeral and superficial relationships of prostitution can offer no temptation. And it may be added that the majority of prostitutes begin their career at a very early age, long before the somewhat late period at which in women the tendency for passion to become strong has yet arrived. It may also be said that an indifference to sexual relationships, a tendency to attach no personal value to them, is often a predisposing cause in the adoption of a prostitute's career; the general mental shallowness of prostitutes may well be accompanied by shallowness of physical emotion. On the other hand, many prostitutes, at all events early in their careers, appear to show a marked degree of sensuality, and to women of coarse sexual fibre the career of prostitution has not been without attractions from this point of view; the gratification of physical desire is known to act as a motive in some cases and is clearly indicated in others. This is scarcely surprising when we remember that prostitutes are in a large proportion of cases remarkably robust and healthy persons in general respects.[2] They withstand without difficulty the risks of their profession, and though under its influence the manifestations of sexual feeling can scarcely fail to become modified or perverted in course of time, that is no proof of the original absence of sexual sensibility. It is not even a proof of its loss, for the real sexual nature of the normal prostitute, and her possibilities of sexual ardour, are chiefly manifested, not in her professional relations with her clients, but in her relations with her "fancy boy" or "bully." It is quite true that the conditions of her life often make it practically

[1] Hammer, who had much opportunity of studying the psychology of prostitutes, remarks that he has seen no reason to suspect sexual coldness, although, as he has elsewhere stated, he is of opinion that indolence, rather than excess of sensuality, is the chief cause of prostitution.

[2] "If we compare a prostitute of thirty-five with her respectable sister," Acton remarked, "we seldom find that the constitutional ravages often thought to be necessary consequences of prostitution exceed those attributable to the cares of a family and the heart-wearing struggles of virtuous labour."

advantageous to the prostitute to have attached to her a man who is devoted to her interests and will defend them if necessary, but that is only a secondary, occasional, and subsidiary advantage of the "fancy boy," so far as prostitutes generally are concerned. She is attracted to him primarily because he appeals to her personally and she wants him for herself. The motive of her attachment is, above all, erotic, in the full sense, involving not merely sexual relations but possession and common interests, a permanent and intimate life led together. "You know that what one does in the way of business cannot fill one's heart," said a German prostitute; "Why should we not have a husband like other women? I, too, need love. If that were not so we should not want a bully." And he, on his part, reciprocates this feeling and is by no means merely moved by self-interest.[1]

On the whole it would appear that prostitutes, though not usually impelled to their life by motives of sensuality, on entering and during the early part of their career possess a fairly average amount of sexual impulse, with variations in both directions of excess and deficiency as well as of perversion. At a somewhat later period it is useless to attempt to measure the sexual impulse of prostitutes by the amount of pleasure they take in the professional performance of sexual intercourse. It is necessary to ascertain whether they possess sexual instincts which are gratified in other ways. In a large proportion of cases this is found to be so. Masturbation, especially, is extremely common among prostitutes everywhere; however prevalent it may be among women generally it is held to be still more prevalent among prostitutes, indeed almost universal.

Homosexuality, though not so common as masturbation, is frequently found among prostitutes—in France, it would seem, more frequently than in England—and it may indeed be said that it occurs more often among prostitutes than among any other class of women. It is favoured by the acquired distaste for normal coitus due to professional intercourse with men, which leads homosexual relationships to be regarded as pure and ideal by comparison. It would appear also that in a certain proportion of cases prostitutes present a congenital tendency to sexual inversion, such a tendency, with an accompanying indifference to intercourse with men, being a predisposing cause of

[1] This was clearly shown by Hans Ostwald (from whom I take the above-quoted observation of a prostitute), one of the best authorities on prostitute life and character. Dr. Max Marcuse supports Ostwald's experiences, and says that the letters of prostitutes and their bullies are love-letters exactly like those of respectable people of the same class, and with the same elements of love and jealousy; these relationships often prove very enduring. The prostitute author of the *Tagebuch einer Verlorenen* also has some remarks on the prostitute's relations to her bully, stating that it is simply the natural relationship of a girl to her lover.

the adoption of a prostitute's career. Kurella even regarded prostitutes as constituting a sub-variety of congenital inverts. Anna Rüling in Germany states that about 20 per cent. prostitutes are homosexual; when asked what induced them to become prostitutes, more than one inverted woman of the street has replied to her that it was purely a matter of business, sexual feeling not coming into the question except with a friend of the same sex.

The occurrence of presumably congenital inversion among prostitutes—although we need not regard prostitutes as necessarily degenerate as a class—suggests the question whether we are likely to find an unusually large number of physical and other anomalies among them. It cannot be said that there is unanimity of opinion on the point. For some authorities prostitutes are merely normal ordinary women of low social rank, if indeed their instincts are not even a little superior to those of the class in which they were born. Other investigators find among them so large a proportion of individuals deviating from the normal that they are inclined to place prostitutes generally among one or other of the abnormal classes.[1]

In a valuable and cautious study of *Prostitution and Mental Deficiency* Walter Clarke (in 1915) summarized the results of many investigations up to that date, as made in various cities of the United States. Some investigators found the percentage of feeble-minded as high as 85, few below 50, only Dr. Katharine Davis, in New York, as low as 38 per cent. definitely feeble-minded. These results have their significance and show the need of careful investigation. But, as Clarke pointed out, they all come from the police court, the prison, the reformatory, the Industrial Home, the Training School, etc. They tell us nothing about the more successful and doubtless more normal prostitutes who never come in contact with such institutions. Nor were there in any case control examinations of non-prostitute girls of the same social class. Moreover, it is evident that different investigators have different standards in judging the possibly feeble-minded. All that we can definitely say is that about one-half of the prostitutes who enter institutions are mentally defective.

The biological element in the causation of prostitution has lately been carefully investigated in Copenhagen on 530 prostitutes by Dr. Tage Kemp (*Prostitution: An Investigation of its Causes especially with regard to Hereditary Factors*, 1936). He gives due importance to unfavourable economic and working conditions, but lays weight on the often neglected hereditary and psychological factors. Psychiatric examination showed that only 29·4 per cent. were normally sound and free from defects of intelligence, the majority being more or

1 With prostitution, as with criminality, it is of course difficult to disentangle the element of heredity from that of environment. It is certain, in any case, that prostitution frequently runs in families.

less retarded or feeble-minded. In England Branthwaite had at an earlier date cautiously reached "a general conclusion that mental defect is one of the many causes" of prostitution. Bönhoffer, studying 190 prostitutes in Breslau prison, found that two-thirds were mentally defective. Flexner rightly points out that Branthwaite's high percentage (almost 70 per cent. below normal) is due to complication with inebriety, and Bönhoffer's to complication with criminality. But Flexner himself admits without hesitation that "personal and anthropological factors are usually involved," though we cannot always say to what definite extent inborn and not acquired. A number of investigators, especially in Italy (Giuffridi-Ruggeri, Fornasari, Ardu, etc.) have found that non-criminal prostitutes, as compared to women generally, show a larger percentage of a great variety of mostly minor physical anomalies. It may be noted that it was long ago stated in a careful study by Ascarilla in Italy that finger imprints of prostitutes, as compared to those of women generally, are more abnormal and especially of more simple and uniform character. But as regards prostitutes in their general conduct in ordinary life, and apart from precise scientific investigation, Kneeland, a very experienced social investigator, stated in 1916 that after seeing or talking to some 125,000 in nearly 7,000 American vice resorts he could not consider the majority feeble-minded or subnormal.

It would seem, on the whole, so far as the evidence at present goes, that prostitutes are not quite normal representatives of the ranks into which they were born. There has been a process of selection of individuals who slightly deviate congenitally from the normal average and are, correspondingly, slightly inapt for normal life.[1] The psychic characteristics which accompany such deviation are not always of an obviously unfavourable nature; the slightly neurotic girl of low-class birth—disinclined for hard work, through defective energy, and perhaps greedy and selfish—may even seem to possess a refinement superior to her station. While, however, there is a tendency to anomaly among prostitutes, it must be clearly recognized that that tendency remains slight so long as we consider impartially the whole class of prostitutes. Those investigators who have reached the conclusion that prostitutes are a highly degenerate and abnormal class have only observed special groups of prostitutes, more especially those who are frequently found in prison. It is not possible to form a just conception of prostitutes by studying them only in prison, any more than it would be possible to form a just conception of clergymen, doctors, or lawyers by studying them exclusively in prison, and this remains true even although a much larger proportion

[1] This fact is not contradicted by the undoubted fact that prostitutes are by no means always contented with the life they chose.

of prostitutes than of members of the more reputable professions pass through prisons ; that fact no doubt partly indicates the greater abnormality of prostitutes.

It has, of course, to be remembered that the special conditions of the lives of prostitutes tend to cause in them the appearance of certain professional characteristics which are entirely acquired and not congenital. In that way we may account for the gradual modification of the feminine secondary and tertiary sexual characters, and the occasional appearance of masculine characters, such as a deep voice, etc. But with all due allowance for these acquired characters, it remains true that such comparative investigations as have so far been made, although inconclusive, seem to indicate that, even apart from the prevalance of acquired anomalies, the professional selection of their vocation tends to separate out from the general population of the same social class, individuals who possess anthropometrical characters varying in a definite direction. The observations thus made seem to indicate that prostitutes tend to be in weight over the average, though not in stature, that in length of arm they are inferior though the hands are longer (this has been found alike in Italy and Russia) ; they have smaller ankles and larger calves, and still larger thighs in proportion to their large calves. The estimated skull capacity and the skull circumference and diameters are somewhat below the normal, not only when compared with respectable women but also with thieves ; there is a tendency to brachycephaly (both in Italy and Russia) ; the cheekbones are usually prominent and the jaws developed ; the hair is darker than in respectable women though less so than in thieves ; it is also unusually abundant, not only on the head but also on the pudenda and elsewhere ; the eyes have been found to be decidedly darker than those of either respectable women or criminals. Not all these traits are necessarily innate.

So far as the evidence goes it serves to indicate that prostitutes tend to approximate to the type which there is reason to regard as specially indicative of developed sexuality. It is, however, unnecessary to discuss this question until our anthropometrical knowledge of prostitutes is more extended and precise.

3. *The Moral Justification of Prostitution.* There are and always have been moralists—many of them people whose opinions are deserving of serious respect—who consider that, allowing for the need of improved hygienic conditions, the existence of prostitution presents no serious problem for solution. It is, at most, they say, a necessary evil, and, at best, a beneficent institution, the bulwark of the home, the inevitable reverse of which monogamy is the obverse. "The immoral guardians of public morality," is the definition of prostitutes given by one writer, who takes the humble view of the matter, and another, taking the loftier ground, writes : "The prostitute fulfils a

social mission. She is the guardian of virginal modesty, the channel to carry off adulterous desire, the protector of matrons who fear late maternity; it is her part to act as the shield of the family." "Female Decii," said Balzac in his *Physiologie du Mariage* of prostitutes, "they sacrifice themselves for the republic and make of their bodies a rampart for the protection of respectable families." In the same way Schopenhauer called prostitutes "human sacrifices on the altar of monogamy." Lecky, again, in an oft-quoted passage of rhetoric[1] may be said to combine both the higher and the lower view of the prostitute's mission in human society, to which he even seeks to give a hieratic character. "The supreme type of vice," he declared, "she is ultimately the most efficient guardian of virtue. But for her, the unchallenged purity of countless happy homes would be polluted, and not a few who, in the pride of their untempted chastity, think of her with an indignant shudder, would have known the agony of remorse and of despair. On that one degraded and ignoble form are concentrated the passions that might have filled the world with shame. She remains, while creeds and civilizations rise and fall, the eternal priestess of humanity, blasted for the sins of the people."

I am not aware that the Greeks were greatly concerned with the moral justification of prostitution. They had not allowed it to assume offensive forms and for the most part they were content to accept it. The Romans usually accepted it, too, but, we gather, not quite so easily. There was an austerely serious, almost Puritanic, spirit in the Romans of the old stock and they seem sometimes to have felt the need to assure themselves that prostitution really was morally justifiable. It is significant to note that they were accustomed to remember that Cato was said to have expressed satisfaction on seeing a man emerge from a brothel, for otherwise he might have gone to lie with his neighbour's wife.

The social necessity of prostitution is the most ancient of all the arguments of moralists in favour of the toleration of prostitutes; and if we accept the eternal validity of the marriage system with which prostitution developed, and of the theoretical morality based on that system, this is a forcible, if not an unanswerable, argument.

The advent of Christianity, with its special attitude towards the "flesh," necessarily caused an enormous increase of attention to the moral aspects of prostitution. When prostitution was not morally denounced, it became clearly necessary to morally justify it; it was impossible for a Church, whose ideals were more or less ascetic, to be benevolently indifferent in such a matter. As a rule we seem to find throughout that while the more independent and irresponsible divines take the side of denunciation, those theologians who have had thrust

1 *History of European Morals*, vol. iii, p. 282.

upon them the grave responsibilities of ecclesiastical statesmanship have rather tended towards the reluctant moral justification of prostitution. Of this we have an example of the first importance in St. Augustine, after St. Paul the chief builder of the Christian Church. In a treatise written in 386 to justify the Divine regulation of the world, we find him declaring that just as the executioner, however repulsive he may be, occupies a necessary place in society, so the prostitute and her like, however sordid and ugly and wicked they may be, are equally necessary; remove prostitution from human affairs and you would pollute the world with lust: "Aufer meretrices de rebus humanis, turbaveris omnia libidinibus."[1] A later theologian, who wrote under the name of Aquinas, was of the same mind with him on this question of prostitution, maintaining the sinfulness of fornication but accepting the necessity of prostitution as a beneficial part of the social structure and comparing it to the sewers which keep a palace pure. "Prostitution in towns is like the sewer in a palace; take away the sewers and the palace becomes an impure and stinking place."[2] Liguori, the most influential theologian of more modern times, was of the like opinion.

This wavering and semi-indulgent attitude towards prostitution was indeed generally maintained by theologians. Some, following Augustine, would permit prostitution for the avoidance of greater evils; others were altogether opposed to it; others, again, would allow it in towns but nowhere else. It was, however, universally held by theologians that the prostitute has a right to her wages, and is not obliged to make restitution.[3] The earlier Christian moralists found no difficulty in maintaining that there is no sin in renting a house to a prostitute for the purposes of her trade; absolution was always granted for this and abstention not required. Fornication, however, remained a sin, and from the twelfth century onwards the Church made a series of organized attempts to reclaim prostitutes. All Catholic theologians hold that a prostitute is bound to confess the sin of prostitution, and most, though not all, theologians have believed that a man also must confess intercourse with a prostitute. At the same time, while there was a certain indulgence to the prostitute herself, the Church was always severe on those who lived on the profits of promoting prostitution, on the *lenones*. Thus the Council of Elvira, which was ready to receive without penance the

[1] Augustine, *De Ordine*, Bk. II, Ch. IV.

[2] *De Regimine Principum* (*Opuscula XX*), lib. iv, cap. XIV. I was indebted to the late Rev. H. Northcote for the reference to the precise place where this statement occurs; it is usually quoted more vaguely. From the middle of lib. ii, the work is not now considered to be by Aquinas.

[3] Lea, *History of Auricular Confession*, vol. ii, p. 69. There was even, it seems, an eccentric decision of the Salamanca theologians that a nun might so receive money, "licite et valide."

prostitute who married, refused reconciliation, even at death, to persons who had been guilty of *lenocinium*.

Protestantism, in this as in many other matters of sexual morality, having abandoned the confessional, was usually able to escape the necessity for any definite and responsible utterances concerning the moral status of prostitution. When it expressed any opinion, or sought to initiate any practical action, it naturally founded itself on the Biblical injunctions against fornication, as expressed by St. Paul, and showed no mercy for prostitutes and no toleration for prostitution. This attitude, which was that of the Puritans, was the more easy, since in Protestant countries, with the exception of special districts at special periods—such as Geneva and New England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—theologians have in these matters been called upon to furnish religious exhortation rather than to carry out practical policies. The latter task they have left to others, and a certain confusion and uncertainty has thus often arisen in the lay Protestant mind. This attitude, in a thoughtful and serious writer, is well illustrated in England by Burton, writing a century after the Reformation. He refers with mitigated approval to "our Pseudo-Catholics," who are severe with adultery but indulgent to fornication, being perhaps of Cato's mind that it should be encouraged to avoid worse mischiefs at home, and who hold brothels "as necessary as churches" and "have whole Colleges of Courtesans in their towns and cities. Many probable arguments they have to prove the lawfulness, the necessity, and a toleration of them, as of usury; and without question in policy they are not to be contradicted, but altogether in religion."[1]

It was not until the beginning of the following century that the ancient argument of St. Augustine for the moral justification of prostitution was boldly and decisively stated in Protestant England, by Bernard Mandeville in his *Fable of the Bees*, and at its first promulgation it seemed so offensive to the public mind that the book was suppressed. "If courtesans and strumpets were to be prosecuted with as much rigor as some silly people would have it," Mandeville wrote, "what locks or bars would be sufficient to preserve the honour of our wives and daughters? . . . It is manifest that there is a necessity of sacrificing one part of womankind to preserve the other, and prevent a filthiness of a more heinous nature. From whence I think I may justly conclude that chastity may be supported by incontinence, and the best of virtues want the assistance of the worst of vices." After Mandeville's time this view of prostitution began to become common in Protestant as well as in other countries, though it was not usually so clearly expressed.

[1] Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Part III, Sect. III, Mem. IV, Subs. II.

A large number of the modern writers on prostitution insist on its socially beneficial character. Thus Charles Richard, in 1882, concluded his book on the subject with the words: "The conduct of society with regard to prostitution must proceed from the principle of gratitude without false shame for its utility, and compassion for the poor creatures at whose expense this is attained." Woods Hutchinson (in his *Gospel according to Darwin*), while speaking with strong disapproval of prostitution and regarding prostitutes as "the worst specimens of the sex," yet regards prostitution as a social agency of the highest value. "From a medico-economic point of view I venture to claim it as one of the grand selective and eliminative agencies of nature, and of highest value to the community. It may be roughly characterized as a safety valve for the institution of marriage."

4. *The Civilizational Value of Prostitution*. The moral argument for prostitution is based on the belief that our marriage system is so infinitely precious that an institution which serves as its buttress must be kept in existence, however ugly or otherwise objectionable it may in itself be. There is, however, another argument in support of prostitution which scarcely receives the emphasis it deserves. I refer to its influence in adding an element, in some form or another necessary, of gaiety and variety to the ordered complexity of modern life, a relief from the monotony of its mechanical routine, a distraction from its dull and respectable monotony. This is distinct from the more specific function of prostitution as an outlet for superfluous sexual energy, and may even affect those who have little or no commerce with prostitutes. This element may be said to constitute the civilizational value of prostitution.

It is not merely the general conditions of civilization, but more specifically the conditions of urban life, which make this factor insistent. Urban life imposes by the stress of competition a severe and exacting routine of dull work. At the same time it makes men and women more sensitive to new impressions, more enamoured of excitement and change. It multiplies the opportunities of social intercourse; it decreases the chances of detection of illegitimate intercourse, while at the same time it makes marriage more difficult, for, by heightening social ambitions and increasing the expenses of living, it postpones the time when a home can be created. Urban life delays marriage and yet renders the substitutes for marriage more imperative.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that it is this motive—the effort to supplement the imperfect opportunities for self-development offered by our restrained, mechanical, and laborious civilization—which plays one of the chief parts in inducing women to adopt, temporarily or permanently, a prostitute's life. We have seen that the economic factor is not, as was once supposed, by any means

predominant in this choice. Nor, again, is there any reason to suppose that an over-mastering sexual impulse is a leading factor. But a large number of young women turn instinctively to a life of prostitution because they are moved by an obscure impulse which they can scarcely define to themselves or express, and are often ashamed to confess. It is, therefore, surprising that this motive should find so large a place even in the formal statistics of the factors of prostitution. Merrick, in London, found that 5,000, or nearly a third, of the prostitutes he investigated, voluntarily gave up home or situation "for a life of pleasure," and he puts this at the head of the causes of prostitution. In America Sanger found that "inclination" came almost at the head of the causes of prostitution, while Woods Hutchinson found "love of display, luxury and idleness" by far at the head. "Disgusted and wearied with work" is the reason assigned by a large number of Belgian girls when stating to the police their wish to be enrolled as prostitutes. In Italy a similar motive is estimated to play an important part. In Tsarist Russia "desire for amusement" came second among the causes of prostitution. There can, I think, be little doubt that, as a thoughtful student of London life has concluded, the problem of prostitution is "at bottom a mad and irresistible craving for excitement, a serious and wilful revolt against the monotony of commonplace ideals, and the uninspired drudgery of everyday life." It is this factor of prostitution, we may reasonably conclude, which is mainly responsible for the fact that with the development of civilization the supply of prostitutes tends to outgrow the demand.

We have seen how large a part in prostitution is furnished by those who have left domestic service to adopt this life. It is not difficult to find in this fact evidence of the kind of impulse which impels a woman to adopt the career of prostitution. "The servant, in our society of equality," wrote Goncourt in his *Journal*, recalling earlier days when she was often admitted to a place in the family life, "has become nothing but a paid pariah, a machine for doing household work, and is no longer allowed to share the employer's human life." And in England, at all events some eighty years ago, we find the same statements concerning the servant's position: "domestic service is a complete slavery," with early hours and late hours, and constant running up and downstairs till her legs are swollen; "an amount of ingenuity appears too often to be exercised, worthy of a better cause, in obtaining the largest possible amount of labour out of the domestic machine"; in addition she is "a kind of lightning conductor," to receive the ill-temper and morbid feelings of her mistress and the young ladies; so that, as some have said, "I felt so miserable I did not care what became of me, I wished I was dead."[1] The servant is

[1] Vanderkiste, *The Dens of London*, 1854.

deprived of all human relationships; she must not betray the existence of any simple impulse, or natural need. At the same time she lives on the fringe of luxury; she is surrounded by the tantalizing visions of pleasure and amusement for which her fresh young nature craves.[1] It is not surprising that, repelled by unrelieved drudgery and attracted by idle luxury, she should take the plunge which will alone enable her to enjoy the glittering aspects of civilization which seem so desirable to her.

This civilizational factor of prostitution, the influence of luxury and excitement and refinement in attracting the girl of the people, as the flame attracts the moth, is indicated by the fact that it is the country-dwellers who chiefly succumb to the fascination. The girls whose adolescent explosive and orgiastic impulses, sometimes increased by a slight congenital lack of nervous balance, have been latent in the dull monotony of country life and heightened by the spectacle of luxury acting on the unrelieved drudgery of town life, find at last their complete gratification in the career of a prostitute. To the town girl, born and bred in the town, this career has not usually much attraction, unless she has been brought up from the first in an environment that predisposes her to adopt it. She is familiar from childhood with the excitements of urban civilization and they do not intoxicate her; she is, moreover, more shrewd to take care of herself than the country girl, and too well acquainted with the real facts of the prostitute's life to be very anxious to adopt her career. Beyond this, also, it is probable that the stocks she belongs to possess a native or acquired power of resistance to unbalancing influences which has enabled them to survive in urban life. She has become immune to the poisons of that life.[2]

In all great cities a large proportion, perhaps the majority, of the inhabitants have usually been born outside the city; and it is not therefore surprising that prostitutes also should often be outsiders. Still it remains a significant fact that so typically urban a phenomenon as prostitution should be so largely recruited from the country. This is everywhere the case. It is interesting to note that this tendency of the prostitute to reach cities from afar, this migratory tendency—which they nowadays share with waiters—is no merely modern

[1] Bonger refers to the prevalence of prostitution among dressmakers and milliners, as well as among servants, as showing the influence of contact with luxury, and adds that the rich women, who look down on prostitution, do not always realize that they are themselves an important factor of prostitution, both by their luxury and their idleness; while they do not seem to be aware that they might themselves act in the same way if placed under the same conditions.

[2] The influence of several generations of town-life in immunizing a stock to the evils of that life (though without reference to prostitution) has been set forth by Reibmayr, *Die Entwicklungsgeschichte des Talentes und Genies*, 1908, vol. ii, pp. 73 *et seq.*

phenomenon. "There are few cities in Lombardy, or France, or Gaul," wrote St. Boniface nearly twelve centuries ago, "in which there is not an adulteress or prostitute of the English nation," and the Saint attributes this to the custom of going on pilgrimage to foreign shrines. At the present time there is no marked English element among Continental prostitutes. Thus in Paris, according to Reuss, the foreign prostitutes in decreasing order were Belgian, German (Alsace-Lorraine), Swiss (especially Geneva), Italian, Spanish, and only then English. Connoisseurs in this matter say, indeed, that the English prostitute, as compared with her Continental (and especially French) sister, fails to show to advantage, being usually grasping as regards money and deficient in charm

It is the appeal of civilization, though not of what is finest and best in civilization, which more than any other motive calls women to the career of a prostitute. It is now necessary to point out that for the man also, the same appeal makes itself felt in the person of the prostitute. The common and ignorant assumption that prostitution exists to satisfy the gross sensuality of the young unmarried man, and that if he is taught to bridle gross sexual impulse or induced to marry early the prostitute must be idle, is altogether incorrect. If all men married when quite young, not only would the remedy be worse than the disease—a point which it would be out of place to discuss here—but the remedy would not cure the disease. The prostitute is something more than a channel to drain off superfluous sexual energy, and her attraction by no means ceases when men are married, for a large number of the men who visit prostitutes, if not the majority, are married. And alike whether they are married or unmarried the motive is not one of uncomplicated lust.

In England, a well-informed writer remarks that "the value of marriage as a moral agent is evidenced by the fact that all the better-class prostitutes in London are almost entirely supported by married men," while in Germany, as stated in the interesting series of reminiscences by a former prostitute, Hedwig Hard's *Beichte einer Gefallenen*, the majority of the men who visit prostitutes are married. The estimate is probably excessive. As regards the motives which lead married men to prostitutes, Hedwig Hard narrates from her own experiences an incident which is instructive and no doubt typical. In the town in which she lived quietly as a prostitute a man of the best social class was introduced by a friend, and visited her habitually. She had often seen and admired his wife, who was one of the beauties of the place, and had two charming children; husband and wife seemed devoted to each other, and every one envied their happiness. He was a man of intellect and culture who encouraged Hedwig's love of books; she became greatly attached to him, and one day ventured to ask him how he could leave his lovely and charming wife to come

to one who was not worthy to tie her shoe-lace. "Yes, my child," he answered, "but all her beauty and culture brings nothing to my heart. She is cold, cold as ice, proper, and, above all, phlegmatic. Pampered and spoilt, she lives only for herself; we are two good comrades, and nothing more. If I kiss her she defends herself, and tells me that I smell horribly of cigars and wine. And if perhaps I attempt more, she jumps our of bed, bristles up as though I were assaulting her, and threatens to throw herself out of the window if I touch her. So, for the sake of peace, I leave her alone and come to you." There can be no doubt that this is the experience of many married men who would be well content to find the sweetheart as well as the friend in their wives.

This is not the only reason why married men visit prostitutes. Even men who are happily married to women in all chief respects fitted to them, are apt to find, after some years of married life, a mysterious craving for variety. They are not tired of their wives, they have not the least wish or intention to abandon them, they will not, if they can help it, give them the slightest pain. But from time to time they are led by an almost irresistible and involuntary impulse to seek a temporary intimacy with women to whom nothing would persuade them to join themselves permanently. Pepys, whose *Diary;* in addition to its other claims upon us, is a psychological document of unique importance, furnishes a characteristic example of this kind of impulse. He had married a young and charming wife, to whom he is greatly attached, and he lives happily with her, save for a few occasional domestic quarrels soon healed by kisses; his love is witnessed by his jealousy, a jealousy which, as he admits, is quite unreasonable, for she is a faithful and devoted wife. Yet a few years after marriage, and in the midst of a life of strenuous official activity, Pepys cannot resist the temptation to seek the temporary favours of other women, seldom prostitutes, but nearly always women of low social class—shop women, workmen's wives, superior servant-girls. Often he is content to invite them to a quiet ale-house, and to take a few trivial liberties. Sometimes they absolutely refuse to allow more than this; when that happens he frequently thanks Almighty God (as he makes his entry in his *Diary* at night) that he has been saved from temptation and from loss of time and money; in any case, he is apt to vow it shall never occur again. It always does occur again. Pepys is quite sincere with himself; he makes no attempt at justification or excuse; he knows that he has yielded to a temptation; it is an impulse that comes over him at intervals, an impulse that he seems unable long to resist. Throughout it all he remains an estimable and diligent official, and in most respects a tolerably virtuous man, with a genuine dislike of loose people and loose talk. The attitude of Pepys is brought out with

incomparable simplicity and sincerity because he is setting down these things for his own eyes only, but his case is substantially that of a vast number of other men, perhaps indeed of the typical *homme moyen sensuel.*

There is a third class of married men, less considerable in number but not unimportant, who are impelled to visit prostitutes; the class of sexually perverted men. There are a great many reasons why such men may desire to be married, and in some cases they marry women with whom they find it possible to obtain the particular form of sexual gratification they crave. But in a large proportion of cases this is not possible. The conventionally bred women often cannot bring herself to humour even some quite innocent fetishistic whim of her husband's, for it is too alien to her feelings and too incomprehensible to her ideas, even though she may be genuinely in love with him; in many cases the husband would not venture to ask, and scarcely even wish, that his wife should lend herself to play the fantastic or possibly degrading part his desires demand. In such a case he turns naturally to the prostitute, the only woman whose business it is to fulfil his peculiar needs. Marriage has brought no relief to these men, and they constitute a noteworthy proportion of a prostitute's clients in every great city. The most ordinary prostitute of any experience can supply cases from among her own visitors to illustrate a treatise of psychopathic sexuality. It is only the prostitute who can be relied upon, through her interests and training, to overcome the natural repulsion to such actions, and gratify desires which, without gratification, might take on other and more dangerous forms.

Although Woods Hutchinson quotes with approval the declaration of a friend, "Out of thousands I have never seen one with good table manners," there is still a real sense in which the prostitute represents, however, inadequately, the attraction of civilization. "There was no house in which I could habitually see a lady's face and hear a lady's voice," wrote the novelist, Anthony Trollope, in his *Autobiography*, concerning his early life in London. "No allurement to decent respectability came in my way. It seems to me that in such circumstances the temptations of loose life will almost certainly prevail with a young man. The temptation at any rate prevailed with me." In every great city, it has been said, there are thousands of men who have no right to call any woman but a barmaid by her Christian name.[1]

[1] In France this intimacy is embodied in the delicious privilege of *tutoiement*. "The mystery of *tutoiement*!" exclaims Ernest La Jeunesse in *L'Holocauste*: "Barriers broken down, veils drawn away, and the ease of existence! At a time when I was very lonely, and trying to grow accustomed to Paris and to misfortune, I would go miles—on foot, naturally—to see a girl cousin and an aunt, merely to have something to *tutoyer*. Sometimes they were not at home, and I had to come back with my *tu*, my thirst for confidence and familiarity and brotherliness."

All the brilliant fever of civilization pulses round them in the streets but their lips never touch it. It is the prostitute who incarnates this fascination of the city, far better than the virginal woman, even if intimacy with her were within reach. The prostitute represents it because she herself feels it, because she has even sacrificed her woman's honour in the effort to indentify herself with it. She has unbridled feminine instincts, she is a mistress of the feminine arts of adornment, she can speak to him concerning the mysteries of womanhood and the luxuries of sex with an immediate freedom and knowledge the innocent maiden cloistered in her home would be incapable of. She appeals to him by no means only because she can gratify the lower desires of sex, but also because she is, in her way, an artist, an expert in the art of feminine exploitation, a leader of feminine fashions. For she is this, and there are, as Simmel has stated in his *Philosphie der Mode*, good psychological reasons why she always should be this. Her uncertain social position makes all that is conventional and established hateful to her, while her temperament makes perpetual novelty delightful. In new fashions she finds "an æsthetic form of that instinct of destruction which seems peculiar to all pariah existences, in so far as they are not completely enslaved in spirit."

But while to the simple, ignorant, and hungry youth the prostitute appeals as the embodiment of many of the refinements and perversities of civilization, on more complex and civilized men she exerts an attraction of an almost reverse kind. She appeals by her fresh and natural coarseness, her frank familiarity with the crudest facts of life; and so lifts them for a moment out of the withering atmosphere of artificial thoughts and unreal sentiment in which so many civilized persons are compelled to spend the greater part of their lives. They feel in the words which the royal friend of a woman of this temperament is said to have used in explaining her incomprehensible influence over him: "She is so splendidly vulgar!" Goncourt, in his famous *Journal* sought to explain the attraction a little more subtly by emphasizing the relief afforded from the monotonous conventions of society, a touch of caprice, free and naked, in the reasonable and methodical order of the world. The probably more usual effect on the French youth of a visit to the brothel, where he is fleeced but enabled to feel that he is henceforth "a man," is admirably described by Huysmans in *En Ménage*.

## IV. The Present Social Attitude Towards Prostitution

We have now surveyed the complex fact of prostitution in some of its various and typical aspects, seeking to realise, intelligently and sympathetically, the fundamental part it plays as an elementary constituent of our marriage system. Finally, we have to consider the

grounds on which prostitution now appears to a large and growing number of persons not only an unsatisfactory method of sexual gratification but a radically bad method. " A necessary evil," that was in old days the common defence of prostitution, or the common apology accepted by those who disapproved. It is a dictum that has worn thin. " If necessary, not evil ; if evil, not necessary " ; that is the approved dictum more in harmony with the modern attitude which the eminent sexologist, Iwan Bloch, set up in the great work, *Die Prostitution,* which towards the end of his life he planned and in large part executed. The significance of the dictum lies in the growing tendency to emphasize the evil of prostitution in relation to the social conditions which we witness to-day.

The movement of antagonism to prostitution manifests itself most conspicuously, as might beforehand have been anticipated, by a feeling of repugnance towards the most ancient and typical, once the most credited and best established prostitutional manifestation, the brothel. The growth of this repugnance is not confined to one or two countries but is international, and may thus be regarded as corresponding to a real tendency in our civilization. It is equally pronounced in prostitutes themselves and in the men who are their clients. The distaste on the one side increases the distaste on the other. Since only the most helpless or the most stupid prostitutes are nowadays willing to accept the servitude of the brothel, the brothel-keeper is forced to resort to extraordinary methods for entrapping victims, and even to take part in that cosmopolitan trade in " white slaves " which exists solely to feed brothels. This state of things has a natural reaction in prejudicing the clients of prostitution against an institution which is going out of fashion and out of credit. An even more fundamental antipathy is engendered by the fact that the brothel fails to respond to the high degree of personal freedom and variety which civilization produces, and always demands even when it fails to produce. On one side the prostitute is disinclined to enter into a slavery which usually fails even to bring her any reward ; on the other side her client feels it as part of the fascination of prostitution under civilized conditions that he shall enjoy a freedom and choice the brothel cannot always or easily provide. Thus it comes about that brothels which once contained nearly all the women who made it a business to minister to the sexual needs of men, now contain only a decreasing minority, and that the transformation of cloistered prostitution into free prostitution is approved by many social reformers as a gain to the cause of morality.[1]

The decay of brothels, whether as cause or as effect, has been

[1] Thus Charles Booth, in his great work on *Life and Labour in London,* final volume (p. 128), recommended that " houses of accommodation," instead of being hunted out, should be tolerated as a step towards the suppression of brothels.

associated with a vast increase of prostitution outside brothels. But the repugnance to brothels in many essential respects also applies to prostitution generally, and, as we shall see, it is exerting a profoundly modifying influence on that prostitution.

The changing feeling in regard to prostitution seems to express itself mainly in two ways. On the one hand there are those who, without desiring to abolish prostitution, resent the abnegation which accompanies it, and are disgusted by its sordid aspects. They may have no moral scruples against prostitution, and they know no reason why a woman should not freely do as she will with her own person. But they believe that, if prostitution is necessary, the relationships of men with prostitutes should be human and agreeable to each party, and not degrading to either. It must be remembered that under the conditions of civilized urban life, the discipline of work is often too severe, and the excitements of urban existence too constant, to render an abandonment to orgy a desirable recreation. The gross form of orgy appeals, not to the town-dweller but to the peasant, and to the sailor or soldier who reaches the town after long periods of dreary routine and emotional abstinence. It is a mistake, even, to suppose that the attraction of prostitution is inevitably associated with the fulfilment of the sexual act. So far is this from being the case that the most attractive prostitute may be a woman who, possessing few sexual needs of her own, desires to please by the charm of her personality; these are among those who most often find good husbands. There are many men who are even well content to have a few hours' free intimacy with an agreeable woman, without any further favour, although that may be open to them. For a large number of men under urban conditions of existence the prostitute is ceasing to be the degraded instrument of a moment's lustful desire; they seek an agreeable human person with whom they may find relaxation from the daily stress or routine of life. When an act of prostitution is thus put on a humane basis, although it by no means thereby becomes conducive to the best development of either party, it at least ceases to be hopelessly degrading. Moreover, under the freer relations of social intercourse between the sexes which now prevail, the desired relaxation and intimacy with an agreeable woman can be obtained without applying to a prostitute.

It is true that the monetary side of prostitution would still exist. But it is possible to exaggerate its importance. It must be pointed out that, though it is usual to speak of the prostitute as a woman who "sells herself," this is rather a crude and inexact way of expressing, in its typical form, the relationship of a prostitute to her client. A prostitute is not a commodity with a market-price, like a loaf or a leg of mutton. She is much more on a level with people belonging to the professional classes, who accept fees in return for services rendered;

the amount of the fee varies, on the one hand in accordance with professional standing, on the other hand in accordance with the client's means, and under special circumstances may be graciously dispensed with altogether. Prostitution places on a venal basis intimate relationships which ought to spring up from natural love, and in so doing degrades them. But strictly speaking there is in such a case no " sale." To speak of a prostitute " selling herself " is scarcely even a pardonable rhetorical exaggeration ; it is both inexact and unjust.

There are an increasing number of people who approach the problem of prostitution not from an æsthetic standpoint but from a moral standpoint. This moral attitude is not, however, that conventionalized morality of Cato and St. Augustine and Lecky, set forth in previous pages, according to which the prostitute in the street must be accepted as the guardian of the wife in the home. These moralists reject indeed the claim of that belief to be considered moral at all. They hold that it is not morally possible that the honour of some women shall be purchaseable at the price of the dishonour of other women, because at such a price virtue loses all moral worth. When they read that, as Goncourt stated, "the most luxurious articles of women's *trousseaux*, the bridal chemises of girls with dowries of six hundred thousand francs, are made in the prison of Clairvaux," they see the symbol of the intimate dependence of our luxurious virtue on our squalid vice. And while they accept the historical and sociological evidence which shows that prostitution is an inevitable part of the marriage system which still survives among us, they ask whether it is not possible so to modify our marriage system that it shall not be necessary to divide feminine humanity into " disreputable " women, who make sacrifices which it is dishonourable to make, and " respectable " women, who take sacrifices which it cannot be less dishonourable to accept.

Prostitutes, a distinguished man of science has said (Duclaux in his *L'Hygiène Sociale*), " have become things which the public uses when it wants them, and throws on the dungheap when it has made them vile. In its pharisaism it even has the insolence to treat their trade as shameful, as though it were not just as shameful to buy as to sell in this market." This point may be illustrated by a remark by the prostitute author of the *Tagebuch einer Verlorenen*. " If the profession of yielding the body ceased to be a shameful one," she wrote, " the army of ' unfortunates ' would diminish by four-fifths—I will even say nine-tenths. Myself, for example ! How gladly would I take a situation as companion or governess ! " The eminent sociologist Tarde thought possible a better organization of prostitutes, a more careful selection among those who desire admission to their ranks, and the cultivation of professional virtues which would raise their moral

level. " If courtesans fulfil a need," Balzac had already said in his *Physiologie du Mariage*, " they must become an institution."

This moral attitude is supported and enforced by the inevitable democratic tendency of civilization which, without necessarily destroying the idea of class, undermines that idea as the mark of fundamental human distinctions and renders it superficial. Prostitution no longer makes a woman a slave ; it ought not to make her even a pariah : " My body is my own," said a young German prostitute, " and what I do with it is nobody else's concern." When the prostitute was literally a slave moral duty towards her was by no means necessarily identical with moral duty towards the free woman. But when, even in the same family, the prostitute may be separated by a great and impassable social gulf from her married sister, it becomes possible to see, and in the opinion of many imperatively necessary to see, that a readjustment of moral values is required. For thousands of years prostitution has been defended on the ground that the prostitute is necessary to ensure the " purity of women." In a democratic age it begins to be realized that prostitutes also are women.

The developing sense of a fundamental human equality underlying the surface divisions of class tends to make the usual attitude towards the prostitute, the attitude of her clients even more than that of society generally, seem painfully cruel. The callous and coarsely frivolous tone of so many young men about prostitutes, it has been said, is " simply cruelty of a peculiarly brutal kind," not to be discerned in any other relation of life. And if this attitude is cruel even in speech it is still more cruel in action, whatever attempts may be made to disguise its cruelty.

From the modern moral standpoint which now concerns us, not only is the cruelty involved in the dishonour of the prostitute absurd, but not less absurd, and often not less cruel, seems the honour bestowed on the respectable women on the other side of the social gulf. It is well recognized that men have sometimes gone to prostitutes to gratify the excitement aroused by fondling their betrothed.[1] As the emotional and physical results of ungratified excitement are not infrequently more serious in women than in men, the betrothed women in these cases are equally justified in seeking relief from other men, and the vicious circle of absurdity might thus be completed.

From the point of view of the modern moralist there is another consideration which was altogether overlooked in the conventional and traditional morality we have inherited, and was indeed practically non-existent in the ancient days when that morality was still a living

[1] Georg Hirth narrates the case of a young officer who, being excited by the caresses of his betrothed and having too much respect for her to go further than this, knew nothing better than to go to a prostitute. Syphilis developed a few days after the wedding. Hirth adds, briefly, that the results were terrible.

reality. Women are no longer divided only into the two groups of wives who are to be honoured, and prostitutes who are the dishonoured guardians of that honour; there is a large third class of women who are neither wives nor prostitutes. For this group of the unmarried virtuous the traditional morality had no place at all; it simply ignored them. But the new moralist, who is learning to recognize both the claims of the individual and the claims of society, begins to ask whether on the one hand these women are not entitled to the satisfaction of their affectional and emotional impulses if they so desire, and on the other hand whether, since a high civilization involves a diminished birth-rate, the community is not entitled to encourage every healthy and able-bodied woman to contribute to maintain the birth-rate when she so desires.

The movement for the modification and gradual diminution of prostitution as an important social element is significantly shown by the increase of an intermediate social element midway between ordinary conventional respectability and prostitution. The two features which clearly mark off this element from prostitution are the fact that the motive is not masculine demands but the intimate natural needs of the girl herself and that there is no commercial transaction involved, money being neither desired nor accepted. The motive is the desire for amusement, for fun, for excitement, this motive being associated, as the girl herself usually recognizes, with indulging the physical needs of sex. This group seems to have attracted no careful study before the present century, when indeed it began rapidly to increase in size. Its study on a large and carefully systematic scale was first organized by G. J. Kneeland, the author of the important study of *Commercialized Prostitution in New York City*, published by the Bureau of Social Hygiene in 1913. Kneeland was thus admirably equipped to organize a study of this allied group (which he regarded as an important source for recruiting the ranks of prostitutes), not only by the position he had occupied as the Director of various investigations into social hygiene but also by his earlier career in sometimes humble fields of labour. In 1916 he sent me a typescript copy of a substantial Report (based on three years' work) he had prepared dealing with *Charity Girls* (as those belonging to this group were termed) for he considered that his conclusions supported mine as set out in the present chapter. "Charity girls," it must be explained, is the name given to this class in derision by the underworld in the sense that it constitutes a competition with the business of the prostitute, but it is not correct as a definition. These girls are not out to give "charity" to men; their primary motive is not to give but to take, though in taking pleasure they naturally reckon on giving it. Kneeland's investigators were not allowed to accost girls; they were only to enter into conversation

with a girl when first addressed by her. But the number who did so in various cities and towns of the United States was very large the Report is based on the study of 400 of them, and many interesting conversations are verbally reproduced. The age of the girls was between 15 and 24, the predominant age being 18. They belonged to all walks of life, some of them had received a superior education, though others were coarse and ignorant; most of them were in work of one kind or another; though others were living in idleness at home. They did not come from poverty-stricken homes, though on the whole they belonged to the poorer classes. But they were respectable and compelled to conceal their adventures from their families and neighbours. For this reason it was strangers, visitors to the town, whom they sought on these occasions. To these men they would talk of their homes and themselves and their experience and information (often including knowledge of contraceptives) with complete frankness. On the whole they were just ordinary girls, quite likely to be pretty or attractive or intelligent, and with nothing to suggest feeble-minded traits. Kneeland regards them as an important source of supply to prostitution, and this may be true of a considerable section, but he is unable to give any figures on the point, and we may probably conclude that most of these girls are merely passing through a temporary phase and would in due course settle down to ordinary life, which they had not indeed abandoned, as wives and mothers. This conclusion would be fairly harmonious with the opinion now tending to become accepted for England as to the replacement of prostitution by a large degree of social and even sexual freedom. Thus George Riley Scott, in his recent *History of Prostitution* (1936), concludes that professional prostitution is declining and giving place to more or less promiscuous relationships between men and women of approximately equivalent social standing. Such a state of things cannot be regarded as ideal, yet even the most conventional moralist is bound to admit that it represents a vast improvement on the ancient system of a special caste of women professionally confined to what has been considered the disreputable business of administering to the sexual needs of men.

All the considerations briefly indicated in the preceding pages—the fundamental sense of human equality generated by our civilization, the repugnance to cruelty which accompanies the refinement of urban life, the ugly contrast of extremes which shock our democratic tendencies, the growing sense of the rights of the individual to authority over his own person, the no less strongly emphasized right of the community to the best that the individual can yield—all these considerations are every day more strongly influencing the modern moralist to assume towards the prostitute an attitude altogether different from that of the morality which we derived from Cato and

Augustine. He sees the question in a larger and more dynamic manner. Instead of declaring that it is well worth while to tolerate and at the same time to contemn the prostitute, in order to preserve the sanctity of the wife in her home, he is not only more inclined to regard each as the proper guardian of her own moral freedom, but he is less certain about the time-honoured position of the prostitute, and, moreover, by no means sure that the wife in the home may not be fully as much in need of rescuing as the prostitute in the street ; he is prepared to consider whether reform in this matter is not most likely to take place in the shape of a fairer apportionment of sexual privileges and sexual duties to women generally, with an inevitably resultant elevation in the sexual lives of men also.

We may sum up the present situation as regards prostitution by saying that on the one hand there is a tendency for its elevation, in association with the growing humanity and refinement of civilization, characteristics which must inevitably tend to mark more and more both those women who become prostitutes and those men who seek them ; on the other hand, but perhaps through the same dynamic force, there is a tendency towards the slow elimination of prostitution by the successful competition of better methods of sexual relationship freed from pecuniary considerations. This refinement and humanization, this competition by better forms of sexual love, are indeed an essential part of progress in civilization.

This moral change cannot, it seems probable, fail to be accompanied by the realization that the facts of human life are more important than the forms. For all changes from lower to higher social forms, from savagery to civilization, are accompanied—in so far as they are vital changes—by a slow and painful groping towards the truth that it is only in natural relations that sanity and sanctity can be found, for, as Nietzsche said, the "return" to Nature should rather be called the "ascent." Only so can we achieve the final elimination from our hearts of that clinging tradition that there is any impurity or dishonour in acts of love for which the reasonable, and not merely the conventional, conditions have been fulfilled. For it is vain to attempt to cleanse our laws, or even our by-laws, until we have first cleansed our hearts.

It would be out of place here to push further the statement of the moral question as it is to-day beginning to shape itself in the sphere of sex. In a psychological discussion we are only concerned to set down the actual attitude. The practical outcome of that attitude must be left to moralists and sociologists and the community generally to work out.

Our inquiry has also, it may be hoped, incidentally tended to show that in practically dealing with the question of prostitution it is pre-eminently necessary to remember the warning which, as regards

that in practically dealing with the question of prostitution it is pre-eminently necessary to remember the warning which, as regards many other social problems, has been embodied by Herbert Spencer in his once famous illustration of the bent iron plate. In trying to make the bent plate smooth, it is useless, Spencer pointed out, to hammer directly on the buckled-up part; if we do so we merely find that we have made matters worse; our hammering, to be effective, must be around, and not directly on, the offensive elevation we wish to reduce; only so can the iron plate be hammered smooth.[1] But this elementary law has not been understood by moralists. The plain, practical, common-sense reformer, as he fancied himself to be—from the time of Charlemagne onwards—has over and over again brought his heavy fist directly down on to the evil of prostitution and has always made matters worse. It is only by wisely working outside and around the evil that we can hope to lessen it effectually. This is the conclusion of one of the most sagacious investigators. "Prostitution," says Flexner, "is in the broadest sense a social problem, the problem of rationalizing human life, and only indirectly to be grappled with." By aiming to develop and raise the relationships of men to women, and of women to women, by modifying our notions of sexual relationships, and by introducing a saner and truer conception of womanhood and of the responsibilities of women as well as of men, by attaining, socially as well as economically, a higher level of human living—it is only by such methods as these that we can reasonably expect to see any diminution and alleviation of the evil of prostitution. So long as we are incapable of such methods we must be content with the prostitution we deserve, learning to treat it with the pity, and the respect, which so intimate a failure of our civilization is entitled to.

[1] Herbert Spencer, *The Study of Sociology*, p. 270.

## CHAPTER VIII

# THE CONQUEST OF THE VENEREAL DISEASES

The Significance of the Venereal Diseases—The History of Syphilis—The Problem of Its Origin—The Social Gravity of Syphilis—The Social Dangers of Gonorrhœa—The Modern Change in the Methods of Combating Venereal Diseases—Causes of the Decay of the System of Police Regulation—Necessity of Facing the Facts—The Innocent Victims of Venereal Diseases—Diseases Not Crimes—The Principle of Notification—The Scandinavian System—Gratuitous Treatment —Punishment for Transmitting Venereal Diseases—Sexual Education in Relation to Venereal Diseases.

IT may, perhaps, excite surprise that in the preceding discussion of prostitution scarcely a word has been said of venereal diseases. In the eyes of many people, the question of prostitution is simply the question of syphilis. But from the psychological point of view with which we are directly concerned, as from the moral point of view with which we cannot fail to be indirectly concerned, the question of the diseases which may be, and so frequently are, associated with prostitution cannot be placed in the first line of significance. The two questions, however intimately they may be mingled, are fundamentally distinct. Not only would venereal diseases still persist even though prostitution had absolutely ceased, but, on the other hand, when we have brought syphilis under the same control as we have brought the somewhat analogous disease of leprosy, the problem of prostitution would still remain.

Yet, even from the standpoint which we here occupy, it is scarcely possible to ignore the question of venereal disease, for the psychological and moral aspects of prostitution, and even the whole question of the sexual relationships, are, to some extent, affected by the existence of the serious diseases which are specially liable to be propagated by sexual intercourse.

It is convenient to term these diseases, mainly propagated by sexual intercourse, by the ancient term "venereal," that is to say appertaining to Venus. No doubt it is too romantic a term, if not sacrilegious to associate the goddess, so loftily celebrated by Lucretius, with disease. In recent times there have been protests against the continued use of the term. In 1930 the editor of the *Journal of Social Hygiene* raised this question and invited the opinions of a large number of American city health officials, with physicians and surgeons specializing in this field, as well as specialists in education and scientific research. Some fifty replies are quoted in the February number of the *Journal* for that year. Strangely, yet quite explicably, the objection most widely

urged to this really lofty term "venereal" is that it implies a "moral stigma"! As many as thirty of the answers recorded state or assume some such objection, and are in favour of abolishing the term "venereal" in favour of the more precise "syphilis" and "gonorrhœa." It is left to the minority to point out that the preferred terms involve at least as much "moral stigma," if such there is, as "venereal," and that even from the scientific viewpoint it is convenient to have a generic name for the three diseases in this field which constitute a clinical group. Even those who opposed the term "venereal" do not, however, generally expect to see it superseded.

It is a curious fact that the word "syphilis" itself is of romantic origin. It is to Fracastorus, distinguished as physician, philosopher, and poet, that we owe it. Born in Verona about 1478, and educated at the great University of Padua, where Copernicus and other famous men were his contemporaries, he wrote important works, all in Latin, and his poem, *Syphilis sive Morbus Gallicus*, his earliest medical book, was published in 1530, and has been described by Osler as the most successful medical poem ever written; it describes the disease so accurately that, the experts hold, it was not surpassed until late in the nineteenth century. The poem tells of Syphilis, a shepherd who kept watch over the flocks of a king. Incensed by a drought from which his cattle were perishing, Syphilis cursed the Sun God, who was thereby so enraged that he emerged to dart forth the infection of a dire disease of which Syphilis became the first victim. At one time there were various speculations as to the precise origin of the word "syphilis." But it now seems clear that, as the philologist Boll acutely pointed out in 1910, Fracastorus took it from the shepherd Sipylus or Siphylis whom Ovid brought into the sixth book of the *Metamorphoses* when narrating the myth of Niobe.

Fournier declared that syphilis, tuberculosis and alcoholism are the three modern plagues. At a much earlier period (1851) Schopenhauer in his *Parerga und Paralipomena* had expressed the opinion that the two things which mark modern social life, in distinction from that of antiquity, and to the advantage of the latter, are the knightly principle of honour and venereal disease; together, he added, they have poisoned life, and introduced a hostile and even diabolical element into the relations of the sexes, which has indirectly affected all other social relationships.[1] It is like a merchandise, says Havelburg of syphilis, which civilization has everywhere carried, so that only a few remote districts of the globe (as in Central Africa and Central Brazil) are to-day free from it.

[1] It is probable that Schopenhauer felt a more than merely speculative interest in this matter. Iwan Bloch has shown good reason for believing that Schopenhauer himself contracted syphilis in 1813, and that this was a factor in constituting his conception of the world and in confirming his constitutional pessimism.

It is undoubtedly true that in the older civilized countries the manifestations of syphilis, though still severe and a cause of physical deterioration in the individual and the race, are less severe than they were even a generation or two ago.[1] This is partly the result of earlier and better treatment, partly, it is possible, the result also of the syphilization of the race, some degree of immunity having now become an inherited possession, although it must be remembered that an attack of syphilis does not necessarily confer immunity.

It was at one time supposed, or assumed, that syphilis had been known in Europe and the East from time immemorial, if not, as Buret imagined as recently as 1890, "from the creation of man." Buret, like many other writers, considered various pathological symptons mentioned by classic Latin writers to be syphilitic, and regarded the disease as reaching Rome from Egypt and ultimately the East. But the investigations of scholars and experts have gradually overthrown this view. The pathological phenomena mentioned by Latin poets may easily be attributed to various other diseased conditions, and none of the great physicians of antiquity have left any picture of syphilis. In Egypt, the supposed home of the disease, many thousand mummies have now been carefully examined by such accomplished anatomists as Sir Grafton Elliot Smith, but no evidence of syphilis discovered. As regards China, syphilis was unknown there before the sixteenth century. Moreover, if an Eastern disease, it should have reached Russia, but an instruction of the Tsar John III to an ambassador to make inquiries about this disease shows that it was not yet known in Russia. It was Notthaft who in 1907 critically investigated the supposed allusions to syphilis in ancient literature and showed that they furnished no proof at all; no syphilologist, he concluded, has ever demonstrated the ancient existence of syphilis in the Old World. The belief is a legend. In 1927 Dr. Gaston Vorberg brought all the available evidence clearly together in his learned work *Ueber den Ursprung der Syphilis*.

There seem better reasons for accepting its ancient existence in the New World, though here also there is sometimes a difficulty in demonstrating a certainty. While a distinguished authority on Mexican antiquity shows that the ancient Mexicans were acquainted with a disease which might well be syphilis, diseased bones have been found in undoubtedly pre-Columban burial places of Florida and Central America which good authorities state can only be syphilitic. In 1925 Means, examining the rich collection of skeletal remains of the prehistoric Ohio mound-builders, found definite gross and rœntgenological evidence of syphilis in three skeletons.

[1] This was in 1907 the definite opinion of Lowndes after an experience of fifty-four years in the treatment of venereal diseases in Liverpool and is now generally accepted.

It was on the campaign of the French King Charles VIII in Italy in 1494 and 1495, that a disease which was undoubtedly syphilis appeared in that country and in Spain and in France, to set the whole of the European world in a state of terror. While the symptoms were the same as those of the disease to-day, they were more severe, the mortality was greater, and the infection spread more rapidly. That is what always happens when a new disease appears among populations which have not yet acquired any immunity to it. Iwan Bloch (in the first chapter of the second volume of his work, *Die Prostitution*) brings together the evidence of the prevalence of syphilis in many of the chief cities of Spain and Italy and France, and the reaction of alarm which its ravages produced. It was, of course, in the brothels that it became chiefly conspicuous. Following Krafft-Ebing, Bloch holds that there is an intimate connection between civilization and syphilization. He would attribute to it a significant part in the development of "modern individualism," and certainly as being the main factor in a sexual revolution transforming mediæval prostitution into the wholly different shape of latter-day prostitution.

When we consider together these three groups of facts: the absence of syphilis in Europe and the East before the end of the fifteenth century; the presence of it claimed for prehistoric America; the discovery by Columbus of the New World as marked by his arrival at Hayti in 1492 and return to Spain the following year, it is inevitable that they should be put together. This was not, however, done by Fracastorus who felt so much interest in the origin of syphilis and was an investigator of such scientific insight, though in Seville, the chief European port for America, it was early known as the Indian disease; it was more commonly elsewhere known as the Gallic disease, on account of its dissemination by the French Army from Italy.

It was in the eighteenth century that Jean Astruc began the rehabilitation of the belief that syphilis is really a comparatively modern disease of American origin, and since then various authorities of weight have given their adherence to this view. It is to the energy and learning of Dr. Iwan Bloch (the first volume of whose important work, *Der Ursprung der Syphilis*, was published in 1901 and the second in 1911) that we owe the fullest statement of the evidence in favour of the American origin of syphilis. Bloch concludes that the disease was brought to Europe by Columbus's men from Central America, more precisely from the Island of Hayti, to Spain in 1493 and 1494, and immediately afterwards was spread by the armies of Charles VIII in an epidemic fashion over Italy and the other countries of Europe.

While, however, the theory of the American origin of syphilis seemed to be that which best accounts for all the facts, it has not been positively demonstrated. The main difficulty was that we did not

hear of any sailors bringing the disease back from the West Indies. The voyage was long, the symptoms must have made much progress before Europe was reached, and there was a physician on board. But recent research has furnished evidence of the new and strange disease making its appearance on Columbus's ship. The absence of definite proof had led some former American investigators to deny altogether the American origin of syphilis. Special reference may be made to Dr. A. F. Downing of Harvard University who, some five years after Bloch's second volume appeared, went into the question in much detail (in the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*) and concluded that we should be ashamed to link this historic event with " the curse of the Spirochete," while Captain Holcomb of the United States Navy (*United States Naval Medical Bulletin*, Vol. 32, 1935) still believes that the American theory " belongs to a bygone age." Some of the writers on this side argue with a heat that itself discredits their arguments and leads the *British Medical Journal* to remark that they evidently feel the theory of the American origin of syphilis to be " an insult to America." In the recent (1936) in many respects admirable *Encyclopedia Sexualis*, edited by Dr. Victor Robinson, of New York, Holcomb, in an article on " Antiquity of Syphilis," dismisses the " fable " of the American origin of what he calls the " morbum Gallicum," and repeats without question the old and now discredited statements about the European antiquity of syphilis.

Syphilis is only one, certainly the most important, of a group of three entirely distinct " venereal diseases " which have only been distinguished in recent times, and so far as their precise nature and causation are concerned, are indeed only to-day beginning to be understood, although two of them were certainly known in antiquity. It is a century ago since Ricord, the French syphilologist, following Bassereau, first taught the complete independence of syphilis both from gonorrhœa and soft chancre, at the same time expounding clearly the three stages, primary, secondary, and tertiary, through which syphilitic manifestations tend to pass, and it has only in modern times been generally realized that two of the most prevalent and serious diseases of the brain and nervous system—general paralysis and tabes dorsalis or locomotor ataxia—have their predominant cause in the invasion of the syphilitic poison many years before. In 1879 a new stage of more precise knowledge of the venereal diseases began with Neisser's discovery of the bacterial gonococcus which is the specific cause of gonorrhœa. This was followed a few years later by the discovery by Ducrey and Unna of the bacillus of soft chancre, the least important of the venereal diseases because exclusively local in its effects. Finally, in 1905—after Metchnikoff had prepared the way by succeeding in carrying syphilis from man to monkey, and Lassar, by inoculation, from monkey to monkey—Fritz Schaudinn made his

great discovery of the protozoal *Spirochæta pallida* (since sometimes called *Treponema pallidum*), which is now generally regarded as the cause of syphilis, and thus revealed the final hiding place of one of the most dangerous and insidious foes of humanity.

There is no more subtle poison than that of syphilis. It is not, like small-pox or typhoid, a disease which produces a brief and sudden storm, a violent struggle with the forces of life, in which it tends, even without treatment, provided the organism is healthy, to succumb, leaving little or no traces of its ravages behind. It penetrates ever deeper and deeper into the organism, with the passage of time leading to ever new manifestations, and no tissue is safe from its attack. And so subtle is this all-pervading poison that though its outward manifestations are amenable to prolonged treatment, it is often most difficult to say that the poison is finally killed out.

The importance of syphilis, and the chief reason why it is necessary to consider it here, lies in the fact that its results are not confined to the individual himself, nor even to the persons to whom he may impart it by the contagion due to contact in or out of sexual relationships: it affects the offspring, and it affects the power to produce offspring. It attacks men and women at the centre of life, as the progenitors of the coming race, inflicting either sterility or the tendency to aborted and diseased products of conception. The child born of syphilitic parents may come into the world apparently healthy only to reveal its syphilitic origin after a period of months or even years. Thus syphilis is probably a main cause of enfeeblement in the race.

Alike in the individual and in his offspring syphilis shows its deteriorating effects on all the structures of the body, but especially on the brain and nervous system. There are, as was pointed out by Mott, five ways in which syphilis affects the brain and nervous system: (1) by moral shock; (2) by the effects of the poison in producing anæmia and impaired general nutrition; (3) by causing inflammation of the membranes and tissues of the brain; (4) by producing arterial degeneration, leading on to brain-softening, paralysis and dementia; (5) as a main cause of the parasyphilitic affections of general paralysis and tabes dorsalis.

It is only in recent times that medical men have recognized the preponderant part played by syphilis in producing general paralysis, which so largely helps to fill lunatic asylums, and tabes dorsalis which is the most important disease of the spinal cord. Syphilis is not indeed usually by itself an adequate cause of general paralysis, for among many savage peoples syphilis is common while general paralysis is rare. It is, Krafft-Ebing was accustomed to say, syphilization and civilization working together which produce general paralysis, perhaps in many cases, there is reason for thinking, on a nervous

soil that is hereditarily degenerated; this is shown by the abnormal prevalence of congenital stigmata found in general paralytics by Näcke and others. "Paralyticus nascitur atque fit," according to the dictum of Obersteiner. Undermined by the jars and strains of civilized life, the deteriorated brain is unable to resist the poison of syphilis, and the result is general paralysis, described as "one of the most terrible scourges of modern times."

The dangers of syphilis lie not alone in its potency and its persistence but also in its prevalence. It is difficult to state the exact incidence of syphilis, but many partial investigations have been made in various countries, and it would appear that from 5 to 20 per cent. of the population in European countries is syphilitic, while about 15 per cent. of the syphilitic cases die from causes directly or indirectly due to the disease.[1] In France generally, Fournier estimated that 17 per cent. of the whole population have had syphilis. In America a committee of the Medical Society of New York, appointed to investigate the question, reported as the result of exhaustive inquiry that in the city of New York not less than a quarter of a million of cases of venereal disease occurred every year, and a leading New York dermatologist has stated that among the better-class families he knows intimately at least one-third of the sons have had syphilis. In Germany 800,000 cases of venereal disease are by one authority estimated to occur yearly, and in the larger universities 25 per cent. of the students are infected every term, venereal disease being, however, specially common among students. At one London hospital it was ascertained that 10 per cent. of the patients had had syphilis; this probably means a real proportion of about 15 per cent. Yet it is obvious that even if the ratio is really lower than this, the national loss in life and health, in defective procreation and racial deterioration, must be enormous and practically incalculable. Even in cash the venereal budget amounts to a large item in the general budget of a nation. The adoption of simple hygienic measures for the prevention and the speedy cure of venereal diseases would be not only indirectly but even directly a source of immense wealth to the nation.

Syphilis is the most obviously appalling of the venereal diseases. Yet it is less frequent and in some respects less dangerously insidious

[1] When Europeans carry syphilis to lands inhabited by people of lower race, the results are often much worse than this. Thus Lambkin, as a result of a special mission to investigate syphilis in Uganda, found that in some districts as many as 90 per cent. of the people suffer from syphilis, and 50 to 60 per cent. of the infant mortality is due to this cause. According to a later report (Dr. J. H. Cook's) 70 per cent. of the Uganda children die at birth or shortly after. These people are the Baganda, a highly intelligent, powerful and well-organized tribe before they received, in the gift of syphilis, the full benefit of civilization and Christianity, which (Lambkin points out) has been largely the cause of the spread of the disease by breaking down social customs and emancipating the women. Christianity is powerful enough to break down the old morality, but not powerful enough to build up a new morality.

than the other chief venereal disease, gonorrhœa.[1] At one time the serious nature of gonorrhœa, especially in women, was little realized. Men accepted it with a light heart as a trivial accident; women ignored it. This failure to realize the gravity of gonorrhœa, even sometimes on the part of the medical profession—so that it has been popularly looked upon, in Grandin's words, as of little more significance than a cold in the nose—has led to a reaction on the part of some towards an opposite extreme, and the risks and dangers of gonorrhœa have been even unduly magnified. This is notably the case as regards sterility. The inflammatory results of gonorrhœa are indubitably a potent cause of sterility in both sexes; some authorities have stated that not only 80 per cent. of the deaths from inflammatory diseases of the pelvic organs and the majority of the cases of chronic invalidism in women, but 90 per cent. of involuntary sterile marriages are due to gonorrhœa. Neisser, the discoverer in 1879 of its gonococcus, ascribed to this disease without doubt 50 per cent. of such marriages. Even this estimate is in the experience of some observers excessive. It is fully proved that the great majority of men who have had gonorrhœa, even if they marry within two years of being infected, fail to convey the disease to their wives, and even of the women infected by their husbands more than half have children.

With regard to another of the terrible results of gonorrhœa, the part it plays in producing life-long blindness from infection of the eyes at birth, there has long been no sort of doubt. The Committee of the Ophthalmological Society in 1884, reported that 30 to 41 per cent. of the inmates of four asylums for the blind in England owed their blindness to this cause. In German asylums Reinhard found that 30 per cent. lost their sight from the same cause. The total number of persons blind from gonorrhœal infection from their mothers at birth is enormous. The British Royal Commission on the Condition of the Blind estimated there were about 7,000 persons in the United Kingdom alone (or 22 per cent. of the blind persons in the country) who became blind as the result of this disease, and Mookerji stated at an Indian Medical Congress, that in Bengal alone there were 600,000 totally blind beggars, 40 per cent. of whom lost their sight at birth through maternal gonorrhœa; and this refers to the beggar class alone.

Although gonorrhœa is liable to produce many and various calamities, there can be no doubt that the majority of gonorrhœal persons escape

[1] There is no dispute concerning the antiquity of gonorrhœa in the Old World as there is regarding syphilis. The disease was certainly known at a very remote period. Even Esarhaddon, the famous King of Assyria, referred to in the Old Testament, was treated by the priests for a disorder which, as described in the cuneiform documents of the time, could only have been gonorrhœa. The disease was also well known to the ancient Egyptians, and evidently common, for they recorded many prescriptions for its treatment. Galen described it but regarded it as a seminal flux and therefore gave it the name it still retains of "gonorrhœa."

either suffering or inflicting any very serious injury. The special reason why gonorrhœa has become so serious a scourge is its prevalence. It is difficult to estimate the proportion of men and women in the general population who have had gonorrhœa, and the estimates vary within wide limits. They are often set too high. Erb, of Heidelberg, anxious to disprove exaggerated estimates of the prevalence of gonorrhœa, went over the records of 2,200 patients in his private practice (excluding all hospital patients) and found the proportion of those who had suffered from gonorrhœa was 48·5 per cent.

Among the working classes the disease is much less prevalent than among higher-class people. In England, a writer in the *Lancet,* many years ago, found as the result of experience and inquiries that 75 per cent. adult males have had gonorrhœa once, 40 per cent. twice, 15 per cent. three or more times. According to Dulberg about 20 per cent. of new cases occur in married men of good social class, the disease being comparatively rare among married men of the working class in England.

At the Royal Society of Medicine in 1931, Colonel Harrison, bringing together the careful statistics he had collected from several countries, stated that the age of greatest incidence is twenty to twenty-four, with the peak occurring earlier in females than in males. On an average the males in this country acquire syphilis at a later age than in Germany or France. The rates for the men in the Services (except for gonorrhœa in the Navy), compare favourably with those of civilians of the same age group in Germany. Higher rates of syphilis in female children up to ten years suggested that congenital syphilis was commoner in females than in males. Another fact Harrison notes is that there is a much lower ratio of females to males in respect of gonorrhœa than in respect to syphilis, suggesting a large amount of hidden gonorrhœa in women.

Still more recently (in 1935) it is stated that at least 5 per cent. of men, women and children in the United States are infected with syphilis, a higher rate in some communities, a lower in others. This means 6,000,000 sufferers from this disease. Two or three times as many have gonorrhœa. Probably 1 case in 9 of syphilis and 1 in 25 to 40 of gonorrhœa are under appropriate treatment. An enormous unknown number are not treated at all, or seek quack practitioners. It has always to be remembered that all statistics of the prevalence of venereal disease are only approximative as a vast number of cases escape observation.

It cannot fairly be said that no attempts have been made to beat back the flood of venereal disease. On the contrary, such attempts have been made from the first. But they have never been effectual.

Medical experts have indeed often protested against the " criminal apathy " with which society has accepted venereal disease with no

vigorous efforts either to prevent or to cure it. That was still true at the beginning of the present century when the matter began to arouse active attention, at first more especially among those whose enthusiasm for reform is sometimes more conspicuous than their wisdom. This was notable in the United States where at an early stage various Vice Commissions were set up. Thus in 1910 the Church Federation of Chicago (representing 600 churches) petitioned the mayor to set up a commission to study vice in the city and make recommendations. Their report on *The Social Evil in Chicago* appeared in the following year and was an important study of conditions prevailing among the 5,000 full-time prostitutes whom they estimated for the city. But the recommendations were more questionable. The body of the report contains many wise words about the subtle and complex nature of the evils to be dealt with, and the need of deliberation and caution in devising methods for combating them. But the Commissioners seem to have flung their own sage counsels to the winds when they came to frame their recommendations. These recommendations are astonishingly numerous; they amount to about a hundred, and one suspects that each of the thirty Commissioners insisted on contributing his own favourite nostrums to the common stock. The main recommendations are "constant and persistent repression of prostitution" immediately, with "absolute annihilation," as the ultimate ideal, the appointment of a "Morals Commission" to suppress disorderly houses, and the establishment of a "Morals Court," the constitution and functions of which are nowhere defined. Other recommendations—some of them undoubtedly good, but others highly dubious—are a law providing for medical certificates showing freedom from venereal disease before marriage; a law against sending any messenger boy under twenty-one to any place where alcoholic liquors are sold, under any pretence whatever; a law to impose the support and education of illegitimate children upon the father until majority; no woman to enter any drinking saloon or bar without male escort; no dancing to be allowed in the same building as a saloon, and no intoxicating liquor to be sold at any public dance; a municipal lodging house to be established for women; greater facilities for the treatment of venereal disease; professional prostitutes to be "committed on an indeterminate sentence" to a municipal farm; a special morals police squad to form part of the city police; all boys and girls under sixteen to be sent home by the police at nine p.m.; searchlights to be directed on the public parks at night, etc.

A large number of these recommendations may be criticized on the basis of the evidence furnished by the Commissioners themselves. They point out repeatedly that laws and ordinances are constantly being made but not enforced, even when they are not unenforcable.

They make clear that the police are open to bribery, and negligent, sometimes drinking with prostitutes at bars when in uniform and on duty. They further show that, even when enforced, a very well-intended police regulation may produce evil results never foreseen when it was framed. For instance, in 1910, the sale of liquors in disorderly houses was prohibited; the order was, of course, so far as possible, evaded, but it led to a large number of prostitutes being placed in flats or other places where they were free from observation by the police, and the evil was not diminished by a mere change of form. The Commission would appear to aim at a moral inquisition somewhat resembling that which existed in Calvin's Geneva. This worked effectively in Geneva because the Government was placed on a theocratic basis which the people as a whole accepted. Sounder methods are now introduced in the United States, but it is stated that, though in theory the American methods are ideal, in practice they are sometimes harsh.

It is on a broader and more reasonable front that the battle against venereal disease is now being carried on. All classes of the community admit its necessity and such vast international organisations as the League of Red Cross Societies and the League of Nations lend their organization at some point, while some years ago an International Union against Venereal Disease was established. In an increasing number of countries it is now held that the evil cannot be conquered by the recognition and registration of prostitutes, and legislatures are introducing methods of dealing with the problem along other lines. Seldom now do we find any to argue, as even a distinguished surgeon appears to have done in the last century, that venereal disease is to be accepted as "God's scourge for vice." Occasionally on religious platforms the doctrine seems to be still preached. At such a meeting we are told, when a clerical speaker put forth this view, a man got up to ask whether he meant that God approved of illicit intercourse with virgins and married women, a question which received no answer from the baffled orator.

The progress that has taken place during the past fifty years and especially since the Great War—which publicly revealed the extent of the venereal evil and emphasized the need for dealing drastically with it—is far greater than during the whole of the preceding period. It is along these lines: (1) the growth of scientific knowledge; (2) the discovery of better therapeutic methods of treating both syphilis and gonorrhœa; (3) active social and legislative methods of care and prevention.

The memorable events in the discovery of the germs of syphilis and gonorrhœa have already been noted. They were closely followed by improvements in treatment after Wassermann in 1906 had devised his valuable and usually reliable serological method of diagnosis

which has been followed by other methods. The new methods of treatment were initiated in 1910 by Ehrlich with the "Ehrlich-Hata 606," as it was termed in recognition of the discoverer's Japanese colleague and the large number of experiments which had preceded the final selection of what has since been usually termed salvarsan. It has an arsenical basis and has since been modified in various related forms, while bismuth has now to some extent taken the place of the often injurious mercury. New and more effective treatments, also, have been adopted for dealing with neurosyphilis and general paralysis and other deadly results of syphilis. There is less progress to note in the treatment of gonorrhœa, but lately (1937) Dr. Anwyl-Davies, investigating a new biological approach, has brought forward an experimental gonococcus antitoxin which offers considerable promise in the specific treatment of gonorrhœa.

Laboratory experiments, however, even with skilful clinical treatment would furnish but a slow method of advance in the absence of a powerful and general public movement. This is now nearly everywhere to be seen. The general opinion is to-day against that ancient system of regimenting and registering and inspecting prostitutes which still prevails in France. The modern outlook is set forth by Abraham Flexner in his admirable survey of *Prostitution in Europe*. The northern countries, Denmark and Sweden and Norway and Finland, have been pioneers in these methods by facilitating the recognition and more or less compulsory treatment of disease and so far as possible making an approach to usually conditional notification.[1] Great progress, where progress was sadly needed, has been made in Russia under Soviet conditions which compel all women to work. An important Venerealogical Institute was established in Moscow in 1922, and Homes exist which prostitutes are induced to enter voluntarily, become educated and trained, and absorbed, as far as possible, into ordinary life. Prostitution has thus been reduced in Russia to the lowest limits and the prevalence of syphilis to a third of what it was in Tsarist days. Holland and Great Britain follow the general movement of reform more cautiously. In Germany excellent work was being done before Nazi days, but now, it is said, there is a relapse, and brothels are again freely open. In America methods vary, but on the whole the movement is on the same lines as in Europe, though it has lagged. Though France thus now remains, the only important country in which regimentation and the licensed brothel

[1] Dr. Freeman, in a special study of venereal disease control in Denmark (*Journal of Social Hygiene*, April, 1937) states that the socialization of diagnosis and treatment is practically complete, and syphilis virtually extinct, only three new cases in 1933 per 10,000 population. The main points of the system are that the care of the venereal sick is a State function, that privacy is provided, and the registration of patients is centralized. Gonorrhœa still remains prevalent.

still survive, here also there is progress, and in 1937 a new scheme was in preparation at the Ministry of Public Health (under Sellier) by which every new venereal patient would be liable to be notified by the doctor to the public health authorities.

There seems little doubt that the general result is a definite and sometimes pronounced decrease in the prevalence of venereal disease. How far it is due to the beneficial effect of hygienic and medical measures, and how far to the undoubted displacement of prostitution by sex relationships on a more wholesome basis, may be doubtful. But since the Great War the fall has been pronounced. Thus in Great Britain, between 1920 and 1924, the number of new cases of syphilis fell by half, though the attendance at treatment centres increased. The combined syphilitic death-rate fell suddenly and enormously from 1918 onwards, and if we take the crude annual death-rate from syphilitic infections as equal to 100 in 1901, it had already fallen to 71 by 1924. In the United States the progress has been similar: 1917 was the peak year, and the falling mortality has proceeded, though irregularly, ever since, though it is confined to the white population, and the coloured population shows little or no progression in this matter. Even at the best, indeed, we have to admit that the conquest of venereal disease is yet far from being achieved.[1]

Since the character of prostitution must continue to change the methods of dealing with it must change. Brothels, and the systems of official regulation which grew up with special reference to brothels, are alike out of date; they have about them a medieval atmosphere, an antiquated spirit, which now render them unattractive and suspected. The conspicuously distinctive brothel is falling into disrepute with its liveried prostitute absolutely under municipal control. Prostitution tends to become more diffused, more intimately mingled with social life generally, less easily distinguished as a definitely separable part of life. We can nowadays only influence it by methods of permeation which bear upon the whole of our social life.

The objection to the regulation of prostitution, even if still of slow growth, is steadily developing everywhere, and may be traced equally in scientific opinion and in popular feeling. Even in France the municipalities of some of the largest cities have either suppressed the system of regulation entirely or shown their disapproval of it, while an inquiry among several hundred medical men showed that less than one-third were in favour of maintaining regulation.

It is true that some distinguished experts advocate a modification in the approach to this problem which would carefully avoid any

[1] Detailed information of the situation in the various countries is supplied in the valuable New York quarterly *Journal of Social Hygiene*. Special aspects of the whole subject are described in Irene Clephane's *Towards Sexual Freedom* (1935), and Ch. III of Max Hodann's *History of Modern Morals* (1937).

attempt to "stamp out" prostitution, since it is generally admitted that this attempt could never be completely successful, but would nevertheless face the necessity of dealing with the chief danger of prostitution, the dissemination of venereal disease. An able statement of this attitude has been presented by Dr. Harry Benjamin of New York (in the New York *Medical Review of Reviews* for September, 1935). He would neither outlaw nor yet openly sanction and recommend prostitution, but tolerate it under control. This would not be in the hands of the police, but exercised by a Board of Sanitary Control with three principal functions: medical, educational, and economic. The voluntary co-operation of the prostitute would in the first place be sought. There would be regular examinations and free health certificates issued anonymously, the bearer being identified only by photograph and finger prints. Homes should be set up, not of the nature of public institutions, in case of disease; advice given to all girls needing it, and free lectures to the public. There would be close association with reputable employment agencies in case of girls wishing to give up prostitution, and economic help for girls in danger of becoming prostitutes.

"The struggle against syphilis is only possible if we agree to regard its victims as unfortunate and not as guilty. . . . We must give up the prejudice which has led to the creation of the term 'shameful diseases,' and which commands silence concerning this scourge of the family and of humanity." In these words of Duclaux, who was the distinguished successor of Pasteur at the Pasteur Institute, in his noble and admirable work *L'Hygiène Sociale,* we have indicated to us, I am convinced, the road by which we can approach the rational and successful treatment of the great social problem of venereal disease.

No evils can be combated until they are recognized, simply and frankly, and honestly discussed. It is a significant and even symbolic fact that the bacteria of disease rarely flourish when they are open to the free currents of pure air. Obscurity, disguise, concealment furnish the best conditions for their vigour and diffusion, and these favouring conditions we are only now ceasing to accord to venereal diseases. We need to face these diseases in the same simple, direct and courageous way which has already been adopted successfully in the case of small-pox, a disease which, of old, men thought analogous to syphilis and which was indeed once as terrible in its ravages.[1]

I have indeed even seen in a medical quarter the statement that

[1] In former days many benefit societies refused relief when a member contracted venereal disease. This was once the rule in the London police force and doctors in general practice had many policemen as patients for venereal disease. But about 1912, I understand, the rule was abolished and the police allowed to go to their police doctors for treatment as for other disorders and without being penalized.

venereal disease cannot be put on the same level with other infectious diseases because it is "the result of voluntary action." But all the diseases, indeed all the accidents and misfortunes of suffering human beings, are equally the involuntary results of voluntary actions. The man who is run over in crossing the street, the family poisoned by unwholesome food, the mother who catches the disease of the child she is nursing, all these suffer as the involuntary result of the voluntary act of gratifying some fundamental human instinct—the instinct of activity, the instinct of nutrition, the instinct of affection. The instinct of sex is as fundamental as any of these, and the involuntary evils which may follow the voluntary act of gratifying it stand on exactly the same level. This is the essential fact: a human being in following the human instincts implanted within him has stumbled and fallen. Any person who sees, not this essential fact but merely some subsidiary aspect of it, reveals a mind that is twisted and perverted; he has no claim to arrest our attention.

But even if we were to adopt the standpoint of the would-be moralist, and to agree that everyone must be left to suffer his deserts, it is far indeed from being the fact that all those who contract venereal disease are in any sense receiving their deserts. In a large number of cases the disease has been inflicted on them in the most absolutely involuntary manner. This is, of course, true in the case of the vast number of infants who are infected at conception or at birth. But it is also true in a scarcely less absolute manner of a large proportion of persons infected in later life.

*Syphilis insontium*, or syphilis of the innocent, as it is commonly called, may be said to fall into five groups: (1) the vast army of congenitally syphilitic infants who inherit the disease from father or mother; (2) the constantly occurring cases of syphilis contracted, in the course of their professional duties, by doctors, midwives, and wet-nurses; (3) infection as a result of affection, as in simple kissing; (4) accidental infection from casual contacts and from using in common the objects and utensils of daily life, such as cups, towels, razors, knives (as in ritual circumcision), etc.; (5) the infection of wives by their husbands.[1]

[1] A sixth less numerous class might be added of the young girls, often no more than children, who have been practically raped by men who believe that intercourse with a virgin is a cure for obstinate venereal disease. In America this belief is frequently held by Italians, Chinese, negroes, etc. W. Travis Gibb, Examining Physician of the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, among over 900 raped children (only a small proportion, he states, of the cases actually occurring), found that 13 per cent. have venereal diseases. A fairly large proportion of these cases, among girls from twelve to sixteen, are, he states, willing victims. Dr. Flora Pollack, of the Johns Hopkins Hospital Dispensary, estimated that in Baltimore alone from 800 to 1,000 children between the ages of one and fifteen are venereally infected every year. The largest number, she finds, is at the age of six, and the chief cause appears to be, not lust, but superstitution.

Kissing is a common source of syphilitic infection, and of all extragenital regions the mouth is the most frequent seat of primary syphilitic sores. In some cases, it is true, especially in prostitutes, this is the result of sexual contacts. But in the majority it is the result of ordinary kisses as between parents and children, lovers and friends and acquaintances. Fairly typical examples, which have been reported, are those of a child, kissed by a prostitute, who became infected and subsequently infected its mother and grandmother ; of a young French bride contaminated on her wedding-day by one of the guests who, according to French custom, kissed her on the cheek after the ceremony ; of an American girl who, returning from a ball, kissed, at parting, the young man who had accompanied her home, thus acquiring the disease which she not long afterwards imparted in the same way to her mother and three sisters. The ignorant and unthinking are apt to ridicule those who point out the serious risks of miscellaneous kissing. But it remains true that people who are not intimate enough to know the state of each other's health are not intimate enough to kiss each other. Infection by the use of domestic utensils, linen, etc., while comparatively rare among the better social classes, is common among the lower classes and among the less civilized nations ; in Russia, according to Tarnowsky, in former days, 70 per cent. of all cases of syphilis in the rural districts were due to this cause and to ordinary kissing ; much the same seems to be true regarding Bosnia and various parts of the Balkan peninsula where syphilis is extremely prevalent among the peasantry. According to Bulkley in America, 50 per cent. of women generally contract syphilis innocently, chiefly from their husbands, while Fournier stated that in France 75 per cent. of married women with syphilis have been infected by their husbands, most frequently (70 per cent.) by husbands who were themselves infected before marriage and supposed that they were cured. Among men the proportion of syphilitics who have been accidentally infected, though less than among women, is still considerable ; it is stated to be at least 10 per cent., and possibly it is a much larger proportion of cases. The scrupulous moralist who is anxious that all should have their deserts cannot fail to be still more anxious to prevent the innocent from suffering in place of the guilty. But it is absolutely impossible for him to combine these two aims ; syphilis cannot be at the same time perpetuated for the guilty and abolished for the innocent.[1]

Even, however, when we have put aside the vast number of venereally infected people who may be said to be, in the narrowest

[1] Nearly all that is said of the accidental infection of syphilis applies with equal or greater force to gonorrhœa, for though gonorrhœa does not enter into the system by so many channels as syphilis, it is a more common as well as a more subtle and elusive disease.

and most conventionally moral sense, "innocent" victims of the diseases they have contracted, there is still much to be said on this question. It must be remembered that the majority of those who contract venereal diseases by illegitimate sexual intercourse are young. They are youths, ignorant of life, scarcely yet escaped from home, still undeveloped, incompletely educated, and easily duped by women; in many cases they have met, as they thought, a "nice" girl, not indeed strictly virtuous but, it seemed to them, above all suspicion of disease, though in reality she was a clandestine prostitute. Or they are young girls (like the American "charity girls") who have indeed ceased to be absolutely chaste, but have not yet lost all their innocence, and who do not consider themselves, and are not by others considered, prostitutes; that, indeed, is one of the rocks on which the system of police regulation of prostitution comes to grief, for the police cannot catch the prostitute at a sufficiently early stage. Of women who become syphilitic, according to Fournier, 20 per cent. are infected before they are nineteen; in hospitals the proportion is as high as 40 per cent.; and of men 15 per cent. cases occur between eleven and twenty-one years of age. The age of maximum frequency of infection is for women twenty years (in the rural population eighteen), and for men twenty-three years. In Germany Erb found that as many as 85 per cent. men with gonorrhœa contracted the disease between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five, a very small percentage being infected after thirty. These young things for the most part fell into a trap which Nature had baited with her most fascinating lure; they were usually ignorant; not seldom they were deceived by an attractive personality; often they were overcome by passion; frequently all prudence and reserve had been lost in the fumes of wine. From a truly moral point of view they were scarcely less innocent than children.

In nearly all these cases there was more or less ignorance—which is but another word for innocence as we commonly understand innocence—and when at last, after the event, the facts are more or less bluntly explained to the victim he frequently exclaims: "Nobody told me!" It is this fact which condemns the pseudo-moralist. If he had seen to it that mothers began to explain the facts of sex to their little boys and girls from childhood, if he had plainly preached on the relations of the sexes from the pulpit, if he had made sure that every youth at the beginning of adolescence received some simple technical instruction concerning sexual health and disease—then, though there would still remain the need of pity for those who strayed from a path that must always be difficult to walk in, the would-be moralist at all events would in some measure be exculpated. But until recently he has seldom lifted a finger to do any of these things.

As Duclaux insisted, it is impossible to grapple successfully with

venereal disease unless we consent not to introduce our prejudices, or even our morals and religion, into the question, but treat it purely and simply as a sanitary question. And if the pseudo-moralist still has difficulty in co-operating towards the healing of this social sore he may be reminded that he himself—like every one of us, little though we may know it—has certainly had a great army of syphilitic and gonorrhœal persons among his own ancestors during the past four centuries. We are all bound together, and it is absurd, even when it is not inhuman, to cast contempt on our own flesh and blood.

The general acceptance of the fact that syphilis and gonorrhœa are diseases, and not necessarily crimes or sins, is the condition for any practical attempt to deal with this question from the sanitary point of view which is now taking the place of the antiquated and ineffective police point of view. The Scandinavian countries of Europe have been the pioneers in practical modern hygienic methods of dealing with venereal disease, and they have more or less fully organized the system of putting venereal diseases under the ordinary law and dealing with them as with other contagious diseases. They avoid so far as possible any police regulation, viewing the matter as mainly medical and social. They tend to adopt a form of notification whether or not compulsory, and also compulsory and full treatment. Sometimes the patients are made responsible for any person they may infect. Every venereally diseased person is thus, so far as possible, in the hands of a doctor whose business it is to give not only treatment, but advice and instruction. The systematic provision of free clinics and dispensaries which such a system involves is now spreading everywhere, even in the countries where other desirable features are not yet established, and with the most beneficial results.

If we dispense with the paternal methods of police regulation, if we rely on the general principles of medical hygiene, and for the rest compel the responsibility for his own good or bad actions to rest on the individual himself, there is a further step, already fully recognised in principle, which we cannot neglect to take : We must look on every person as accountable for the venereal diseases he transmits. So long as we refuse to recognize venereal diseases as on the same level as other infectious diseases, and so long as we offer no full and fair facilities for their treatment, it is unjust to bring the individual to account for spreading them. But if we publicly recognize the danger of infectious venereal diseases, and if we leave freedom to the individual, we must inevitably declare, with Duclaux, that every man or woman must be held responsible for the diseases he or she communicates. In most of the Scandinavian countries individual responsibility for venereal infection is well recognized and actively enforced. In France, though the law has not been definite and satisfactory, actions for the transmission of syphilis have long been

successfully brought before the courts. In England, as well as in the United States, the law is more unsatisfactory and more helpless, in relation to this class of offences, than it is in France. In England the communication of venereal disease by illicit intercourse is not an actionable wrong if the act of intercourse has been voluntary, even although there has been wilful and intentional concealment of the disease. *Ex turpi causâ non oritur actio*, it is sententiously said; for there is much dormitative virtue in a Latin maxim. No legal offence has still been committed if a husband contaminates his wife, or a wife her husband. The "freedom" enjoyed in this matter by England and the United States is well illustrated by Dr. Isidore Dyer, of New Orleans: "A patient with primary syphilis refused even charitable treatment and carried a book wherein she kept the number of men she had inoculated. When I first saw her she declared the number had reached two hundred and nineteen and that she would not be treated until she had had revenge on five hundred men." In a community where the most elementary rules of justice prevailed, facilities would exist to enable this woman to obtain damages from the man who had injured her or even to secure his conviction to a term of imprisonment. In obtaining some indemnity for the wrong done her, and securing the "revenge" she craved, she would at the same time have conferred a benefit on society. She is shut out from any action against the one person who injured her; but as a sort of compensation she is allowed to become a radiating focus of disease, to shorten many lives, to cause many deaths, to pile up incalculable damages; and in so doing remain perfectly within her legal rights. A community which encourages this state of things is not only immoral but stupid.

There seems, however, to be a growing body of influential opinion, both in England and in the United States, in favour of making the transmission of venereal disease an offence punishable by heavy fine or by imprisonment. In any enactment no stress should be put on the infection being conveyed "knowingly." Any formal limitation of this kind is unnecessary, as in such a case the Court always takes into account the offender's ignorance or mere negligence, and it is mischievous because it tends to render an enactment ineffective and to put a premium on ignorance; the husbands who infect their wives with gonorrhœa immediately after marriage have usually done so from ignorance, and it should be at least necessary for them to prove that they have been fortified in their ignorance by medical advice.

It is sometimes said that it is very well to make the individual legally responsible for the venereal disease he communicates, but that the difficulties of bringing that responsibility home would still remain. And those who admit these difficulties frequently reply that at the worst we should have in our hands a means of educating respon-

sibility; the man who deliberately ran the risk of transmitting such infection would be made to feel that he was no longer fairly within his legal rights but had done a bad action. We are thus led on finally to what is now becoming generally recognized as the chief and central method of combating venereal disease, if we are to accept the principle of individual responsibility as ruling in this sphere of life. Organized sanitary and medical precautions, and proper legal protection for those who have been injured, are inoperative without the educative influence of elementary hygienic instruction placed in the possession of every young man and woman. In a sphere that is necessarily so intimate medical organization and legal resort can never be all-sufficing; knowledge is needed at every step in every individual to guide and even to awaken that sense of personal moral responsibility which must here always rule. Wherever the importance of these questions is becoming acutely realized the problem is resolving itself mainly into one of education.

A knowledge of the risks of disease by sexual intercourse, both in and out of marriage—and indeed, apart from sexual intercourse altogether—is a further stage of that sexual education which, as we have already seen, must begin, so far as the elements are concerned, at a very early age. Youths and girls should be taught, as the distinguished Austrian economist, Anton von Menger wrote, shortly before his death, in his excellent little book, *Neue Sittenlehre*, that the production of children is a crime when the parents are syphilitic or otherwise incompetent through transmissible chronic diseases. Information about venereal disease should not indeed be given until after puberty is well established. It is unnecessary and undesirable to impart medical knowledge to young boys and girls and to warn them against risks they are yet little liable to be exposed to. It is when the age of strong sexual instinct, actual or potential, begins that the risks, under some circumstances, of yielding to it, need to be clearly present to the mind. No one who reflects on the actual facts of life ought to doubt that it is in the highest degree desirable that every adolescent youth and girl ought to receive some elementary instruction in the general facts of venereal disease, tuberculosis, and alcoholism. These three "plagues of civilization" are so widespread, so subtle and manifold in their operation, that everyone comes in contact with them during life, and that everyone is liable to suffer, even before he is aware, perhaps hopelessly and for ever, from the results of that contact. Vague declamation about immorality and vaguer warnings against it have no effect and possess no meaning, while rhetorical exaggeration is unnecessary. A simple and concise statement of the actual facts concerning the evils that beset life is sufficient and adequate, but essential. To ignore this need is only possible to those who take a dangerously frivolous view of life.

It is the young woman as much as the youth who needs this enlightenment. There are still some persons so ill-informed as to believe that though it may be necessary to instruct the youth it is best to leave his sister unsullied, as they consider it, by a knowledge of the facts of life. This is the reverse of the truth. The girl is even more concerned than the youth. A man has the matter more within his own grasp, and if he so chooses he may avoid all the grosser risks of contact with venereal disease. But it is not so with the woman. Whatever her own state, she cannot be sure that she may not have to guard against the possibility of disease in her future husband as well as in those to whom she may entrust her child. It is a possibility which the educated woman, so far from being dispensed from, is more liable to encounter than is the working-class woman, for venereal disease is less prevalent among the poor than the rich. The careful physician, even when his patient is a minister of religion, considers it his duty to inquire if he has had syphilis, and the clergyman of most severely correct life recognizes the need of such inquiry and may perhaps smile, but seldom feels himself insulted. The relationship between husband and wife is much more intimate than that between doctor and patient, and a woman is not dispensed from the necessity of such inquiry concerning her future husband by the conviction that the reply must surely be satisfactory. Moreover, it may well be in some cases that, if she is adequately enlightened, she may be the means of saving him, before it is too late, from the guilt of premature marriage and its fateful consequences, so deserving to earn his everlasting gratitude. Even if she fails in winning that, she still has her duty to herself and to the future race which her children will help to form.

We must face the fact that it is the woman herself who must be accounted responsible, as much as a man, for securing the right conditions of a marriage she proposes to enter into. In practice, at the outset, that responsibility may no doubt be in part delegated to parents or guardians. It is unreasonable that any false delicacy should be felt about this matter on either side. Questions of money and of income are discussed before marriage, and as public opinion grows sounder none will question the necessity of discussing the still more serious question of health, alike that of the prospective bridegroom and of the bride. An incalculable amount of disease and marital unhappiness would be prevented if before an engagement was finally concluded each party placed himself or herself in the hands of a physician and authorized him to report to the other party. Such a report would extend far beyond venereal disease. If its necessity became generally recognized it would put an end to much fraud which now takes place when entering the marriage bond. It constantly happens at present that one party or the other conceals the existence of some serious disease or disability which is speedily discovered after marriage,

sometimes with a painful and alarming shock—as when a man discovers his wife in an epileptic fit on the wedding night—and always with the bitter and abiding sense of having been duped. There can be no reasonable doubt that such concealment is an adequate cause of divorce.

Such inquiries would be greatly facilitated by the adoption of some such method as that sponsored by the Eugenics Society which issues a carefully prepared schedule to be filled in by each of the partners proposing marriage, with the help of the family doctor, and solely for each other's information.

It is necessary to point out that every movement in this direction must be the spontaneous action of individuals directing their own lives according to the rules of an enlightened conscience, and cannot be initiated by the dictation of the community as a whole enforcing its commands by law. In these matters law can only come in at the end, not at the beginning. In the essential matters of marriage and procreation laws are primarily made in the brains and consciences of individuals for their own guidance. Unless such laws are already embodied in the actual practice of the great majority of the community it is useless for parliaments to enact them by statute. They will be ineffective or else they will be worse than ineffective by producing undesigned mischiefs. We can only go to the root of the matter by insisting on education in moral responsibility and instruction in matters of fact.

It is not for the physician to complicate and confuse his own task as teacher by mixing it up with considerations which belong to the spiritual sphere. But in carrying out impartially his own special work of enlightenment he will always do well to remember that there is in the adolescent mind, as it has been necessary to point out in a previous chapter, a spontaneous force working on the side of sexual hygiene. Those who believe that the adolescent mind is merely bent on sensual indulgence are not less false and mischievous in their influence than are those who think it possible and desirable for adolescents to be preserved in sheer sexual ignorance. However concealed, suppressed or deformed—usually by the misplaced and premature zeal of foolish parents and teachers—there arise at puberty ideal impulses which, even though they may be rooted in sex, yet in their scope transcend sex. These are capable of becoming far more potent guides of the physical sex impulse than are merely material or even hygienic considerations.

It is time to summarize and conclude this discussion of the prevention of venereal disease, which, though it may seem to the superficial observer to be merely a medical and sanitary question outside the psychologist's sphere, is yet seen on closer view to be intimately related

even to the most spiritual conception of the sexual relationships. Not only are venereal diseases the foes to the finer development of the race, but we cannot attain to any wholesome and beautiful vision of the relationships of sex so long as such relationships are liable at every moment to be corrupted and undermined at their source. We must not underrate the enormous progress which has in recent years been made. It was possible to state in 1936 from the medical side in England that " syphilis is no longer a fearsome and disfiguring disease and rarely a fatal and incapacitating one, provided it is treated early and adequately." At the same time an experienced authority in America, Wolbarst, similarly wrote that " with proper treatment intelligently administered, and with the full co-operation of the patient, it is safe to say that every case of syphilis and gonorrhœa ought to be completely cured." But Wolbarst goes on to insist on the need for great care and caution in deciding that the cure is really effected. Even when, as in some countries and some States of the United States, pre-marital examination is compulsory before a marriage licence can be issued, he regards the value of a single examination as slight, and even when sanctioning marriage he is opposed to sanctioning procreation until a further four or five years have elapsed without signs of infection in the partner. In cases where both partners have at one time had syphilis, he is against any procreation, and encourages sterilization, as by vasectomy of the husband. As there can never be absolute certainty, Wolbarst urges that the once syphilized man should always confide in his future partner beforehand ; he remarks that " the young woman of to-day accepts the situation with a degree of understanding and sympathy that is most creditable " ; he finds, moreover, that a woman who has herself suffered infection before marriage is " more conscientious than men " over the question of subsequent marriage. When the man shows no decent instincts Wolbarst considers that the doctor is in some cases justified in violating the " professional secret " rather than risk subjecting an innocent young woman to a life of invalidism and possibly to death.

Notwithstanding the vigorous propaganda of Social Hygiene Societies in the United States, and the activity of venereal experts, it is sometimes said that less progress has been made in America in combating venereal disease than in Europe. There is certainly need for progress since it is estimated (1936) that 12,000,000 people in the United States are suffering from syphilis with over a million new cases coming annually under treatment, and that this number might perhaps have to be multiplied by three if all cases could be detected. There is, however, widespread dissatisfaction with the present system, and much interest in the success of the Scandinavian system of reporting, following up contacts, and compulsory treatment. In 1936 there was an important conference of health officers with the Surgeon

General of the United States Public Health Service under influential auspices, and many valuable lines of action were brought forward and initiated. Later in the year, under the chairmanship of Surgeon-General Parran, keenly interested and experienced in the matter, with the encouragement of the socially minded President Roosevelt, and the financial support of Congress, nearly a thousand influential delegates from all over the States met in Washington, and a nation-wide campaign of propaganda was established.[1]

We cannot yet precisely measure the interval which must elapse before, so far as Europe at least is concerned, syphilis and gonorrhœa are sent to that limbo of monstrous old dead diseases to which plague and leprosy have gone and smallpox is already drawing near. But society is beginning to realize that into this field also must be brought the weapons of light and air, the sword and the breastplate with which all diseases can alone be attacked. As we have seen, there are four methods by which in the more enlightened countries venereal disease is now beginning to be combated.[2] (1) By proclaiming openly that the venereal diseases are diseases like any other disease, although more subtle and terrible than most, which may attack anyone from the unborn baby to its grandmother, and that they are not, more than other diseases, the shameful penalties of sin, from which relief is only to be sought, if at all, by stealth, but human calamities; (2) by adopting methods of securing official information concerning the extent, distribution, and variation of venereal disease, through the already recognised plan of notification and otherwise, and by providing such facilities for treatment, especially, for free treatment, as may be found necessary; (3) by training the individual sense of moral responsibility, so that every member of the community may realize that to inflict a serious disease on another person, even only as a result of reckless negligence, is a more serious offence than if he or she had used the knife or the gun or poison as the method of attack, and that it is necessary to introduce special legal provision in every country to assist the recovery of damages for such injuries and to inflict penalties by loss of liberty or otherwise; (4) by the spread of hygienic knowledge, so that all adolescents, youths and girls alike, may be furnished at the outset of adult life with an equipment of information which will assist them to avoid the grosser risks of contamination and enable them to recognize and avoid danger at the earliest stages.

A few years ago, when no method of combating venereal disease was known except that system of police regulation, which is now in its

[1] *Journal of Social Hygiene* for January, February, March and April, 1937.

[2] I leave out of account, as beyond the scope of the present work, the auxiliary aids to the suppression of venereal diseases furnished by the promising new methods, only now beginning to be understood, of treating or even aborting such diseases. For these, see for instance, the latest edition of Dr. David Lees's standard work, *Diagnosis and Treatment of Venereal Diseases*, 1937.

decadence, it would have been impossible to bring forward such considerations as these ; they would have seemed Utopian. To-day they are not only recognised as practical, but they are being actually put into practice, although, it is true, with varying energy and insight in different countries. Yet in the competition of nationalities, as Max von Niessen has well said, " that country will best take a leading place in the march of civilization which has the foresight and courage to introduce and carry through those practical movements of sexual hygiene which have so wide and significant a bearing on its own future, and that of the human race generally."

## CHAPTER IX

# SEXUAL MORALITY

Prostitution in Relation to Our Marriage System—Marriage and Morality—The Definition of the Term " Morality "—Theoretical Morality—Its Division into Traditional Morality and Ideal Morality—Practical Morality—Practical Morality Based on Custom—The Only Subject of Scientific Ethics—The Reaction between Theoretical and Practical Morality—Sexual Morality in the Past an Application of Economic Morality—The Combined Rigidity and Laxity of this Morality—The Growth of a Specific Sexual Morality and the Evolution of Moral Ideals—Manifestations of Sexual Morality—Disregard of the Forms of Marriage—Trial Marriage—Marriage after Conception of Child—The Status of Woman—The Historical Tendency Favouring Moral Equality of Women with Men—The Theory of the Matriarchate—Mother-Descent—Women in Babylonia—Egypt—Rome—The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries—The Historical Tendency Favouring Moral Inequality of Woman—The Ambiguous Influence of Christianity—Influence of Teutonic Custom and Feudalism—Chivalry—Woman in England—The Vanishing Subjection of Woman—Inaptitude of the Modern Man to Domineer—The Growth of Moral Responsibility in Women—The Concomitant Development of Economic Independence—Invasion of the Modern Industrial Field by Women—In How Far this is Socially Justifiable—The Sexual Responsibility of Women and Its Consequences—The " Self-Sacrifice " of Women—Society not Concerned with Sexual Relationships—Procreation the Sole Sexual Concern of the State—The Supreme Importance of Maternity.

It has been necessary to deal fully with the phenomena of prostitution because, however aloof we may personally choose to hold ourselves from those phenomena, they really bring us to the heart of the sexual question in so far as it constitutes a social problem. If we look at prostitution from the outside, as an objective phenomenon, as a question of social dynamics, it is seen to be not a merely accidental and eliminable incident of our formal marriage system but an integral part of it, without which it would fall to pieces. This will probably be fairly clear to all who have followed the preceding exposition of prostitutional phenomena. There is, however, more than this to be said. Not only is prostitution the buttress of our formal marriage system, but if we look at marriage, not from the outside as a formal institution, but from the inside with relation to the motives that constitute it, we find that marriage in a large proportion of cases is itself in certain respects a form of prostitution. This has been emphasized so often and from so many widely different standpoints that it may seem hardly necessary to labour the point here. But the point is one of extreme importance in relation to the question of sexual morality. Our social conditions have been unfavourable to the development of a high moral feeling in women. The difference

between the woman who sells herself in prostitution and the woman who sells herself in marriage, according to the saying of Marro, "is only a difference in price and duration of the contract." Or, as Forel put it, marriage is "a more fashionable form of prostitution," that is to say, a mode of obtaining, or disposing of, for monetary considerations, a sexual commodity. Marriage is, indeed, not merely a more fashionable form of prostitution, it is a form sanctified by law and religion, and the question of morality is not allowed to intrude. Morality may be outraged with impunity provided that law and religion have been invoked. The essential principle of prostitution is thus legalized and sanctified among us. That is why it is so difficult to arouse any serious indignation, or to maintain any reasoned objections, against our prostitution considered by itself. The most plausible ground is that of those who (like Belfort Bax), bringing marriage down to the level of prostitution, maintain that the prostitute is a "blackleg" who is accepting less than the "market rate of wages," *i.e.*, marriage, for the sexual services she renders. But even this low ground is quite unsafe. The prostitute is really paid extremely well considering how little she gives in return; the wife is really paid extremely badly considering how much she often gives, and how much she necessarily gives up. For the sake of the advantage of economic dependence on her husband, she must give up, to a large and only slowly diminishing extent, those rights over her children, her property, her work, and her own person which she enjoys as an unmarried woman, even, it may be added, as a prostitute. The prostitute never signs away the right over her own person, as the wife is compelled to do; the prostitute, unlike the wife, retains her freedom and her personal rights, although these may not often be of much worth. It is the wife rather than the prostitute who is the "blackleg."

It is by no means only during recent years that our marriage system has been arraigned before the bar of morals. Seventy years ago James Hinton exhausted the vocabulary of denunciation in describing the immorality and selfish licentiousness which our marriage system covers with the cloak of legality and sanctity.[1] At an earlier date, in 1847, Gross-Hoffinger, in his *Die Schicksale der Frauen und die Prostitution*—a remarkable book which Bloch described as possessing an epoch-marking significance—vigorously showed that the problem of prostitution is in reality the problem of marriage, and that we can only reform away prostitution by reforming marriage, regarded as a compulsory institution resting on an antiquated economic basis. More than a century and a half earlier a man of very different

[1] For a presentation of Hinton's views on sex problems, based on the extensive MSS. to which he consigned them, see Mrs. Havelock Ellis, *James Hinton: A Sketch*, 1918.

type scathingly analysed the morality of his time, with a brutal frankness, indeed, that seemed to his contemporaries a revoltingly cynical attitude towards their sacred institutions, and they felt that nothing was left to them save to burn his books. Describing modern marriage in his *Fable of the Bees* (1714, p. 64), and what that marriage might legally cover, Mandeville wrote : " The fine gentleman I spoke of need not practise any greater self-denial than the savage, and the latter acted more according to the laws of nature and sincerity than the first. The man that gratifies his appetite after the manner the custom of the country allows of, has no censure to fear. If he is hotter than goats or bulls, as soon as the ceremony is over, let him sate and fatigue himself with joy and ecstasies of pleasure, raise and indulge his appetite by turns, as extravagantly as his strength and manhood will give him leave. He may, with safety, laugh at the wise men that should reprove him : all the women and above nine in ten of the men are of his side." Thus the charge brought against our marriage system from the point of view of morality is that it subordinates the sexual relationship to considerations of money and of lust. That is precisely the essence of prostitution.

The only legitimately " moral " end of marriage—whether we regard it from the wider biological standpoint or from the narrower standpoint of human society—is as a sexual selection, effected in accordance with the laws of sexual selection, and having as its direct object a united life of complete mutual love and as its indirect object the procreation of the race. Unless procreation forms part of the object of marriage, society has nothing whatever to do with it and has no right to make its voice heard. But if procreation is one of the ends of marriage, then it is imperative from the biological and social points of view that no influences outside the proper natural influence of sexual selection—exercised, no doubt, so far as possible along eugenic lines—should be permitted to affect the choice of conjugal partners, for, in so far as wholesome sexual selection is interfered with, the offspring is likely to be injured and the interests of the race affected.

Yet, whatever its real moral content may be, a modern marriage is still always " legal " and " sacred." We are indeed so accustomed to economic forms of marriage that, as Sidgwick truly observed, when they are spoken of as " legalized prostitution " it constantly happens that " the phrase is felt to be extravagant and paradoxical."

A man who marries for money or for ambition is departing from the biological and moral ends of marriage. A woman who sells herself for life is morally on the same level as one who sells herself for a night. The fact that the payment seems larger, that in return for rendering certain domestic services and certain personal complacencies —services and complacencies in which she may be quite inexpert—

she will secure an almshouse in which she will be fed and clothed and sheltered for life makes no difference in the moral aspect of her case. The moral responsibility is, it need scarcely be said, at least as much the man's as the woman's. It is largely due to the ignorance and even the indifference of men, who often know little or nothing of the nature of women and the art of love. The unintelligence with which even men who might, one thinks, be not without experience, select as a mate a woman who, however fine and charming she may be, possesses none of the qualities which her wooer really craves, is a perpetual marvel. To refrain from testing and proving the temper and quality of the woman he desires for a mate is no doubt an amiable trait of humility on a man's part. But it is certain that a man should never be content with less than the best of what a woman's soul and body have to give, however unworthy he may feel himself of such a possession. This demand, it must be remarked, is in the highest interests of the woman herself. A woman can offer to a man what is a part at all events of the secret of the universe. The woman degrades herself who sinks to the level of a candidate for an asylum for the destitute.

Our discussion of the psychic facts of sex has thus, it will be seen, brought us up to the question of morality. Over and over again, in setting forth the phenomena of prostitution, it has been necessary to use the word "moral." That word, however, is vague and even, it may be, misleading, because it has several senses. So far, it has been left to the intelligent reader, as he will not fail to perceive, to decide from the context in what sense the word was used. But at the present point, before we proceed to discuss sexual psychology in relation to marriage, it is necessary, in order to avoid ambiguity, to remind the reader what precisely are the chief main senses in which the word "morality" is commonly used.

The morality with which ethical treatises are concerned is *theoretical morality*. It is concerned with what people "ought"—or what is "right" for them—to do. Socrates in the Platonic dialogues was concerned with such theoretical morality: what "ought" people to seek in their actions? The great bulk of ethical literature, until recent times one may say the whole of it, is concerned with that question. Such theoretical morality is, as Sidgwick said, a study rather than a science, for science can only be based on what is, not on what ought to be.

Even within the sphere of theoretical morality there are two very different kinds of morality, so different indeed that sometimes each regards the other as even inimical or at best only by courtesy, with yet a shade of contempt, "moral." These two kinds of theoretical morality are *traditional morality* and *ideal morality*. Traditional morality is founded on the long-established practices of a community

and possesses the stability of all theoretical ideas based on the past social life and surrounding every individual born into the community from his earliest years. It becomes the voice of conscience which speaks automatically in favour of all the rules that are thus firmly fixed, even when the individual himself no longer accepts them. Many persons, for example, who were brought up in childhood to the Puritanical observance of Sunday, will recall how, long after they had ceased to believe that such observances were "right," they yet in the violation of them heard the protest of the automatically aroused voice of "conscience," that is to say, the expression within the individual of customary rules which have indeed now ceased to be his own but were those of the community in which he was brought up.

Ideal morality, on the other hand, refers not to the past of the community but to its future. It is based not on the old social actions that are becoming antiquated, and perhaps even anti-social in their tendency, but on new social actions that are as yet only practised by a small though growing minority of the community. Nietzsche was a conspicuous champion of ideal morality, the heroic morality of the pioneer, of the individual of the coming community, against traditional morality, or, as he called it, herd-morality, the morality of the crowd. These two moralities are necessarily opposed to each other, but, we have to remember, they are both equally sound and equally indispensable, not only to those who accept them but to the community which they both contribute to hold in vital theoretical balance. We have seen them both, for instance, applied to the question of prostitution; traditional morality defends prostitution, not for its own sake, but for the sake of the marriage system which it regards as sufficiently precious to be worth a sacrifice, while ideal morality refuses to accept the necessity of prostitution, and looks forward to progressive changes in the marriage system which will modify and diminish prostitution.

But altogether outside theoretical morality, or the question of what people "ought" to do, there remains *practical morality*, or the question of what, as a matter of fact, people actually do. This is the really fundamental and essential morality. Latin *mores* and Greek ἦθος both refer to *custom*, to the things that are, and not to the things that "ought" to be, except in the indirect and secondary sense that whatever the members of the community, in the mass, actually do, is the thing that they feel they ought to do. In the first place, however, a moral act was not done because it was felt that it ought to be done, but for reasons of a much deeper and more instinctive character. It was not first done because it was felt it ought to be done, but it was felt it "ought" to be done because it had actually become the custom to do it.

The actions of a community are determined by the vital needs of a community under the special circumstances of its culture, time, and land. When it is the general custom for children to kill their aged parents that custom is always found to be the best not only for the community but even for the old people themselves, who desire it; the action is both practically moral and theoretically moral.[1] And when, as among ourselves, the aged are kept alive, that action is also both practically and theoretically moral; it is in no wise dependent on any law or rule opposed to the taking of life, for we glory in the taking of life under the patriotic name of "war," and are fairly indifferent to it when involved by the demands of our industrial system; but the killing of the aged no longer subserves any social need and their preservation ministers to our civilized emotional needs. The killing of a man is indeed notoriously an act which differs widely in its moral value at different periods and in different countries. It was quite moral in England two centuries ago and less, to kill a man for trifling offences against property, for such punishment commended itself as desirable to the general sense of the educated community. To-day it would be regarded as highly immoral. We have only lately doubted the morality of condemning to death and imprisoning for life an unmarried girl who destroyed her infant at birth, solely actuated, against all her natural impulses, by the primitive instinct of self-defence. It cannot be said that we have yet begun to doubt the morality of killing men in war, though we no longer approve of killing women and children, or even non-combatants generally.[2] Every age or land has its own morality.

"Custom, in the strict sense of the word," well says Westermarck, "involves a moral rule. . . . Society is the school in which men learn to distinguish between right and wrong. The headmaster is custom."[3] Custom is not only the basis of morality but also of law. "Custom is law; that is well recognized in law." The field of theoretical morality has been found so fascinating a playground for clever philosophers that there has sometimes been a danger of for-

[1] Thus of the Eskimo of former days, Henry Ellis tells (in *A Voyage to Hudson's Bay in* 1746 *and* 1747) that "when their parents grow so old as to be incapable to support themselves by their own labour they require their children to strangle them, and this is esteemed an act of obedience in their children to perform. The manner of discharging this last duty is thus: the grave of the old person being dug, he goes into it and after having conversed and smoked a pipe and perhaps drank a dram or two with their children, the old person signifies he is ready; upon which two of the children put a thong about his neck, one standing on one side and the other opposite to him, pull violently till he is strangled. then cover him with earth, and over that they erect a kind of rough monument of stones."

[2] This was true when I first wrote it, but is no longer true to-day.

[3] Westermarck, *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, pp. 9, 159; also the whole of Ch. VII. Actions that are in accordance with custom call forth public approval, actions that are opposed to custom call forth public resentment, and Westermarck powerfully argues that such approval and such resentment are the foundation of moral judgments.

getting that, after all, it is not theoretical morality but practical morality, the question of what men in the mass of a community actually do, which constitutes the real stuff of morals. If we define more precisely what we mean by morals, on the practical side, we may say that it is constituted by those customs which the great majority of the members of a community regard as conducive to the welfare of the community at some particular time and place. It is for this reason—*i.e.*, because it is a question of what is and not of merely what some think ought to be—that practical morals form the proper subject of science. "If the word 'ethics' is to be used as the name for a science," Westermarck says, "the object of that science can only be to study the moral consciousness as a fact."

Practical morality is thus the solid natural fact which forms the biological basis of theoretical morality, whether traditional or ideal. The excessive fear, so widespread among us, lest we should injure morality is misplaced. We cannot hurt morals though we can hurt ourselves. Morals are based on nature and can at the most only be modified. As Crawley rightly insisted,[1] even the categorical imperatives of our moral traditions, so far from being, as is often popularly supposed, attempts to suppress Nature, arise in the desire to assist Nature; they are simply an attempt at the rigid formulation of natural impulses. The evil of them only lies in the fact that, like all things that become rigid and dead, they tend to persist beyond the period when they were a beneficial vital reaction to the environment. They thus provoke new forms of ideal morality; and practical morals develops new structures, in accordance with new vital relationships, to replace older and desiccated traditions.

There is clearly an intimate relationship between theoretical morals and practical morals or morality proper. For not only is theoretical morality the outcome in consciousness of realized practices embodied in the general life of the community, but, having thus become conscious, it reacts on those practices and tends to support them or, by its own spontaneous growth, to modify them. This action is diverse, according as we are dealing with one or the other of the strongly marked divisions of theoretical morality: traditional and posterior morality, retarding the vital growth of moral practice, or ideal and anterior morality, stimulating the vital growth of moral practice. Practical morality, or morals proper, may be said to stand

[1] See, *e.g.*, "Exogamy and the Mating of Cousins," in *Essays Presented to E. B. Tylor*, 1907, p. 53. "In many departments of primitive life we find a naive desire to, as it were assist Nature, to affirm what is normal, and later to conform it by the categorical imperative of custom and law. This tendency still flourishes in our civilized communities, and, as the worship of the normal, is often a deadly foe to the abnormal and eccentric, and too often paralyses originality." The same point has more recently been asserted by Malinowski: "Social and cultural influences always endorse and emphasize the original individuality of the biological fact."

between these two divisions of theoretical morality. Practice is perpetually following after anterior theoretical morality, in so far of course as ideal morality really is anterior and not, as so often happens, astray up a blind alley. Posterior or traditional morality always follows after practice. The result is that while the actual morality, in practice at any time or place, is always closely related to theoretical morality, it can never exactly correspond to either of its forms. It always fails to catch up with ideal morality; it is always outgrowing traditional morality. The moral world is as little exempt from ceaseless change as the physical world. Frazer well says in the admirable Preface to the volume on "Taboo" in his *Golden Bough*: "The ethical like the legal code of a people stands in need of constant revision."

It has been necessary at this point to formulate definitely the three chief forms in which the word "moral" is used, although under one shape or another they cannot but be familiar to the reader. In the discussion of prostitution it has indeed been easily possible to follow the usual custom of allowing the special sense in which the word was used to be determined by the context. But now, when we are, for the moment, directly concerned with the specific question of the evolution of sexual morality, it is necessary to be more precise in formulating the terms we use. In this chapter, except when it is otherwise stated, we are concerned primarily with morals proper, with actual conduct as it develops among the masses of a community, and only secondarily with anterior morality or with posterior morality.

Sexual morality, like all other kinds of morality is necessarily constituted by inherited traditions modified by new adaptations to the changing social environment. If the influence of tradition becomes unduly pronounced, the moral life tends to decay and lose its vital adaptability. If adaptability becomes too facile the moral life tends to become unstable and to lose authority. It is only by a reasonable synthesis of structure and function—of what is called the traditional with what is called the ideal—that the moral life can retain its authority without losing its reality. Many, even among those who call themselves moralists, have found this hard to understand. In a vain desire for an impossible logicality they have over-emphasized either the ideal influence on practical morals or, still more frequently, the traditional influence, which has appealed to them because of the impressive authority its *dicta* seem to convey. The results in the sphere we are here concerned with have often been unfortunate, for no social impulse is so rebellious to decayed traditions, so volcanically eruptive, as that of sex.

We are accustomed to identify our present marriage system with "morality" in the abstract, and for many people, perhaps for most,

it is difficult to realize that the slow and insensible movement which is always affecting social life at the present time, as at every other time, is profoundly affecting our sexual morality. A transference of values is constantly taking place; what was once the very standard of morality becomes immoral, what was once without question immoral becomes a new standard. Such a process is almost as bewildering as for the European world two thousand years ago was the great struggle between the Roman city and the Christian Church, when it became necessary to realize that what Marcus Aurelius, the great pattern of morality, had sought to crush as without question immoral,[1] was becoming regarded as the supreme standard of morality. The classic world considered love and pity and self-sacrifice as little better than weakness and sometimes worse; the Christian world not only regarded them as moralities but incarnated them in a god. Our sexual morality has likewise disregarded natural human emotions, and is incapable of understanding those who declare that to retain unduly traditional laws that are opposed to the vital needs of human societies is not a morality but an immorality.

The reason why the gradual evolution of moral ideals, which is always taking place, tends in the sexual sphere, at all events among ourselves, to reach a stage in which there seems to be an opposition between different standards lies in the fact that as yet we really have no specific sexual morality at all.[2] That may seem surprising at first to one who reflects on the immense weight which is usually attached to "sexual morality." And it is undoubtedly true that we have a morality which we apply to the sphere of sex. But that morality is one which belongs mainly to the sphere of property and was largely developed on a property basis. All the historians of morals in general, and of marriage in particular, have set forth this fact, and illustrated it with a wealth of historical material. We have as yet no generally recognized sexual morality which has been based on the specific sexual facts of life. That becomes clear at once when we realize the central fact that the sexual relationship is based on love, at the very least on sexual desire, and that that basis is so deep as to be even physiological, for in the absence of such sexual desire it is physiologically impossible for a man to effect intercourse with a woman. Any specific sexual morality must be based on that fact. But our so-called "sexual morality," so far from being based on that fact, attempts to ignore it

[1] The spirit of Christianity, as illustrated by Paulinus, in his *Epistle XXV*, was from the Roman point of view, as Dill remarks, "a renunciation not only of citizenship, but of all the hard-won fruits of civilization and social life."

[2] It thus happens that, as Lecky said in his *History of European Morals*, "of all the departments of ethics the questions concerning the relations of the sexes and the proper position of woman are those upon the future of which there rests the greatest uncertainty." Some progress has perhaps been made since these words were written, but they still hold true of the majority of people.

altogether. It makes contracts, it arranges sexual relationships beforehand, it offers to guarantee permanency of sexual inclinations. It introduces, that is, considerations of a kind that is perfectly sound in the economic sphere to which such considerations rightly belong, but ridiculously incongruous in the sphere of sex to which they have solemnly been applied. The economic relationships of life, in the large sense, are, as we shall see, extremely important in the evolution of any sound sexual morality, but they belong to the conditions of its development and do not constitute its basis.

I insist here on the economic element in our sexual morality, because that is the element which has given it a kind of stability and become established in law. Our sexual morality is, in reality, a bastard born of the union of property-morality with primitive ascetic morality, neither in true relationship to the vital facts of the sexual life. It is, indeed, the property element which, with a few inconsistencies, has become finally the main concern of our law, but the ascetic element (with, in the past, a wavering relationship to law) has had an important part in moulding popular sentiment and in creating an attitude of reprobation towards sexual intercourse *per se*, although such intercourse is regarded as an essential part of the property-based and religiously sanctified institution of legal marriage.

The glorification of virginity led by imperceptible stages to the formulation of "fornication" as a deadly sin, and finally as an actual secular "crime." It is sometimes stated that it was not until the Council of Trent that the Church formally anathematized those who held that the state of marriage was higher than that of virginity, but the opinion had been more or less formally held from almost the earliest ages of Christianity, and is clear in the epistles of Paul. All the theologians agree that fornication is a mortal sin. Caramuel, indeed, the distinguished Spanish theologian, who made unusual concessions to the demands of reason and nature, held that fornication is only evil because it is forbidden, but Innocent XI formally condemned that proposition. Fornication as a mortal sin became gradually secularized into fornication as a crime. Fornication was a crime in France even as late as the eighteenth century, as Tarde found in his historical investigations of criminal procedure in Perigord; adultery was also a crime and severely punished quite independently of any complaint from either of the parties.

The Puritans of the Commonwealth days in England (like the Puritans of Geneva) followed the Catholic example and adopted ecclesiastical offences against chastity into the secular law. By an Act passed in 1653 fornication became punishable by three months' imprisonment inflicted on both parties. By the same Act the adultery of a wife (nothing is said of a husband) was made felony, both for her and her partner in guilt, and therefore punishable by death.

The action of a pseudo-morality, such as our sexual morality has been, is double-edged. On the one side it induces a secret and shamefaced laxity, on the other it upholds a rigid and uninspiring theoretical code which so few can consistently follow that theoretical morality is thereby degraded into a more or less empty form. "The human race would gain much," said the wise Senancourt, "if virtue were made less laborious. The merit would not be so great, but what is the use of an elevation which can rarely be sustained?"

There is one great modern movement of a definite kind which will serve to show how clearly sexual morality is to-day moving towards a new standpoint. This is the changing attitude of the bulk of the community towards both State marriage and religious marriage, and the growing tendency to disallow State interference with sexual relationships, apart from the production of children.

There has no doubt always been a tendency among the masses of the population in Europe to dispense with the official sanction of sexual relationships until such relationships have been well established and the hope of offspring has become justifiable. This tendency has been crystallized into recognized customs among numberless rural communities little touched either by the disturbing influences of the outside world or the controlling influences of theological Christian conceptions. But at the present day this tendency is not confined to the more primitive and isolated communities of Europe among whom, on the contrary, it has tended to die out. It is an unquestionable fact, says Professor Bruno Meyer, that far more than the half of sexual intercourse now takes place outside legal marriage. Among the intelligent classes and in prosperous and progressive communities this movement is well marked. We see throughout the world the practical common sense of the people shaping itself in the direction which has been pioneered by the ideal moralists who invariably precede the new growth of practical morality.

The voluntary childless marriages of to-day have served to show the possibility of such unions outside legal marriage, and such free unions are becoming, as Dr. Elsie Parsons points out, "a progressive substitute for marriage." The gradual but steady rise in the age for entering on legal marriage also points in the same direction, though it indicates not merely an increase of free unions but an increase of all forms of normal and abnormal sexuality outside marriage. In the large cities, like London, where the possibilities of extra-matrimonial relationships are greater, the age for legal marriage is higher than in the country.

The more or less permanent free unions in Europe are usually to be regarded merely as trial-marriages. That is to say they are a precaution rendered desirable both by uncertainty as to either the harmony or the fruitfulness of union until actual experiment has

been made, and by the practical impossibility of otherwise rectifying any mistake in consequence of the antiquated rigidity of most European divorce laws. Such trial marriages are therefore demanded by prudence and caution, and as foresight increases with the development of civilization, and constantly grows among us, we may expect that there will be a parallel development in the frequency of trial marriage and in the social attitude towards such unions. The only alternative—that a radical reform in European marriage laws should render the divorce of a legal marriage as economical and as convenient as the divorce of a free marriage—cannot yet be expected, for law always lags behind public opinion and public practice.

If, however, we take a wider historical view, we find that we are in the presence of a phenomenon which, though favoured by modern conditions, is ancient and widespread, dating, so far as Europe is concerned, from the time when the Church first sought to impose ecclesiastical marriage, so that it is practically a continuation of the early European custom of private marriage.

Trial-marriages pass by imperceptible gradations into the group of courtship customs which, while allowing the young couple to spend the night together, in a position of more or less intimacy, exclude, as a rule, actual sexual intercourse. Night-courtship flourishes in stable and well-knit European communities not liable to disorganization by contact with strangers. It seems to be specially common in Teutonic and Celtic lands, and is known by various names, as *Probenächte, fensterln, Kiltgang, hand-fasting, bundling, sitting-up, courting on the bed, etc.* It is well known in Wales; it is found in various English counties, as in Cheshire; it existed in eighteenth-century Ireland (according to Richard Twiss's *Travels*); in New England it was known as *tarrying;* in Holland it is called *questing.* In Norway, where it is called *night-running,* on account of the long distance between the homesteads, I am told that it is generally practised, though the clergy preach against it; the young girl puts on several extra skirts and goes to bed, and the young man enters by door or window and goes to bed with her; they talk all night, and are not bound to marry unless it should happen that the girl becomes pregnant.

The custom of free marriage unions, usually rendered legal before or after the birth of children, seems to be fairly commcn in many, or perhaps all, rural parts of England. The union is made legal, if found satisfactory, even when there is no prospect of children. In some counties it is said to be almost a universal practice for the women to have sexual relationships before legal marriage; sometimes she marries the first man whom she tries; sometimes she tries several before finding the man who suits her. Such marriages necessarily,

on the whole, turn out better than marriages in which the woman, knowing nothing of what awaits her and having no other experiences for comparison, is liable to be disillusioned or to feel that she " might have done better." Even when legal recognition is not sought until after the birth of children, it by no means follows that any moral deterioration is involved.

" The lower social classes, especially peasants," remarks Ehrhard of Germany, " know better than we that the marriage bed is the foundation of marriage. On that account they have retained the primitive custom of trial-marriage which, in the Middle Ages, was still practised even in the best circles. It has the further advantage that the marriage is not concluded until it has shown itself to be fruitful. Trial-marriage assumes, of course, that virginity is not valued beyond its true worth." With regard to this point it may be mentioned that in many parts of the world a woman is more highly esteemed if she has had intercourse before marriage. While virginity is one of the sexual attractions a woman may possess, an attraction that is based on a natural instinct, yet an exaggerated attention to virginity can only be regarded as a sexual deviation, allied to *paidophilia*, the sexual attraction to children.

It is, however, by no means only in rural districts, but in great cities also, that marriages are at the outset free unions. Thus in Paris Desprès stated many years ago that in an average arrondissement nine out of ten legal marriages are the consolidation of a free union ; though, while that was an average, in a few arrondissements it was only three out of ten. Much the same conditions prevail in Paris to-day ; at least half the marriages, it is stated, are of this kind.

In Teutonic lands the custom of free unions is ancient and well established. It is assumed by many that this state of German morality as it exists to-day is a new phenomenon, but it seems highly probable that the sexual customs of the German people are not substantially different from what they were in the dawn of Teutonic history. This is the opinion of one of the profoundest students of Indo-Germanic origins. In his *Reallexicon* (art. " Keuschheit ") Schrader points out that the oft-quoted Tacitus, strictly considered, can only be taken to prove that women were chaste after marriage, and that no prostitution existed. There can be no doubt, he adds, and the earliest historical evidence shows, that women in ancient Germany were not chaste before marriage. This fact has been disguised by the tendency of the old classic writers to idealize the Northern peoples. Tacitus, indeed, in the passage more often quoted in Germany than any other passage in classic literature, while emphasizing the late puberty of the Germans and their brutal punishment of conjugal infidelity on the part of the wife, seemed to imply that they were also chaste.

But we have always to remark that Tacitus wrote as a satirizing moralist as well as a historian, and that, when he declaimed concerning the virtues of the German barbarians, he had one eye on the Roman gallery whose vices he desired to lash. Much the same perplexing confusion has been created by Gildas, who, in describing the results of the Saxon Conquest of Britain, wrote as a preacher as well as a historian, and the same moral purpose (as Dill has pointed out) distorts Salvian's picture of the vices of fifth-century Gaul.

The freedom and tolerance of old Russian sexual customs is fairly well-known. As a Russian correspondent wrote to me in pre-Soviet days, " the liberalism of Russian manners enables youths and girls to enjoy complete independence. They visit each other alone, they walk out alone, and they return home at any hour they please. They have a liberty of movement as complete as that of grown-up persons ; some avail themselves of it to discuss politics and others to make love. They are able also to procure any books they please ; thus on the table of a college girl I knew I saw the *Elements of Social Science*, then prohibited in Russia ; this girl lived with her aunt, but she had her own room, which only her friends were allowed to enter ; her aunt or other relations never entered it. Naturally, she went out and came back at what hours she pleased. Many other college girls enjoy the same freedom in their families."

It would appear that this freedom of sexual relationships in old Russia—apart from the influence of ancient custom—was largely rendered necessary by the difficulty of divorce. Married couples, who were unable to secure divorce, separated and found new partners without legal marriage. That difficulty has been removed under the Soviets.

There is considerable interest in realizing the existence of long-continued sexual freedom—by some incorrectly termed " immorality," for what is in accordance with the customs or *mores* of a people cannot be immoral—among older peoples still virile and robust. There is a perhaps even greater interest in tracing the development of the same tendency among new prosperous and progressive communities who have either not inherited the custom of sexual freedom or are now only reviving it. We may, for instance, take the case of Australia and New Zealand. This development may not, indeed, be altogether recent. It seems, however, to have developed with the increase of self-conscious civilization. "After careful inquiry," says Northcote, who had lived for many years in the Southern hemisphere (*Christianity and Sex Problems*, Ch. VIII), " the writer finds sufficient evidence that of recent years intercourse out of wedlock has tended towards an actual increase in parts of Australia." Coghlan, a chief authority on Australian statistics, stated this more precisely in his *Childbirth in New South Wales*. He found that at least twenty-

seven marriages in a hundred followed conception. During the same period children conceived before marriage were legitimatized in rather more than forty-seven cases out of one hundred. "A study of the figures of births of ante-nuptial conception makes it obvious that in a very large number of instances pre-marital intercourse is not an anticipation of marriage already arranged, but that the marriages are forced upon the parties, and would not be entered into were it not for the condition of the woman." That marriage should be, as Coghlan puts it, " forced upon the parties," is not, of course, desirable in the general moral interest, and it is also a sign of imperfect responsibility in the parties themselves. But the existence of such a state of things, in a young country belonging to a part of the world where the general level is high, is a fact of the first significance when we are attempting to forecast the direction in which civilized morality is moving.

It is sometimes said, or at least implied, that in this movement women are taking only a passive part, and that the initiative lies with men who are probably animated by a desire to escape the responsibilities of marriage. This is far from being the case. The active part taken by German girls in sexual matters is referred to again and again, as by the Lutheran pastors in their elaborate and detailed report of moral conditions in rural districts : " In sexual wantonness girls are not behind young men. Unchastity among the rural labouring classes is universal, and equally pronounced in both sexes."

Among women of the educated classes the conditions are somewhat different. Restraints, both internal and external, are much greater. Virginity, at all events in its physical fact, is retained, for the most part, long past girlhood. Yet the fundamental tendencies remain the same. So far as England is concerned, in all classes of society there are women who are only virgins by repute. Many have borne children without being even suspected of cohabitation ; but the majority adopt methods of preventing conception. A doctor in a small provincial town declared that such irregular intimacies were the rule, not by any means the exception, in his district. As regards Germany, Dr. Adams-Lehmann stated : " I can say that during consultation hours I see very few virgins over thirty. These women," she adds, " are sensible, courageous ,and natural, often the best of their sex ; and we ought to give them our moral support. They are working towards a new age."

It is frequently stated that the pronounced tendency witnessed at the present time to dispense as long as possible with the formal ceremony of binding marriage is unfortunate because it places women in a disadvantageous position. In so far as the social environment in which she lives views with disapproval sexual relationship without

formal marriage the statement is obviously to that extent true, though it must be remarked, on the other hand, that when social opinion strongly favours legal marriage it acts as a compelling force in the direction of legitimating free unions. But if the absence of the formal marriage bond constituted a real and intrinsic disadvantage to women in sexual relations they would not show themselves so increasingly ready to dispense with it. And, as a matter of fact, those who are intimately acquainted with the facts declare that the absence of formal marriage tends to give increased consideration to women and is even favourable to fidelity and to the prolongation of the union. This seems to be true as regards people of the most different social classes and even of different races. It is probably based on fundamental psychological facts, for the sense of compulsion always tends to produce a movement of exasperation and revolt. We are not here concerned with the question as to how far formal marriage also is based on natural facts; that is a question which will come up for discussion at a later stage.

The advantage for women of free sexual unions over compulsory marriage is well recognized in the case of the working classes of London, among whom sexual relationships before marriage are not unusual, and are indulgently regarded. It was, for instance, clearly asserted in the monumental work of C. Booth, *Life and Labour of the People.* "It is even said of rough labourers," we read, for instance, in the final volume of this work, "that they behave best if not married to the woman with whom they live." We find the same tendency in Jamaica where the population is largely coloured. Legal marriage is here discarded to an even greater extent than in London, for little care is taken to legitimate children by marriage. It was found by a committee appointed to inquire into the marriage laws of Jamaica that three out of every five births are illegitimate, that is to say that legal illegitimacy has ceased to be immoral, having become the recognized custom of the majority of the inhabitants. There is no social feeling against illegitimacy. The men approve of the decay of legal marriage, because they say the women work better in the house when they are not married; the women approve of it, because they say that men are more faithful when not bound by legal marriage. The statistics of similar conditions in Cuba were studied by Heape. Here, according to the 1899 census, a considerable percentage of the inhabitants generally were living in what the United States Census officials termed "consentual unions" which were frequently permanent. Generally speaking, there were among the whites 23 consentual unions to 100 legal marriages, among the coloured people 250 consentual unions to 100 legal marriages.

We thus see that we have to-day reached a position in which—partly owing to economic causes and partly to causes which are more

deeply rooted in the tendencies involved by civilization—women are more often detached than of old from legal sexual relationship with men and both sexes are less inclined than in earlier stages of civilization to sacrifice their own independence even when they form such relationships. "I never heard of a woman over sixteen years of age who, prior to the breakdown of aboriginal customs after the coming of the whites, had not a husband," wrote Curr of the Australian Blacks. Even as regards some parts of Europe, it is still possible to-day to make almost the same statement. But in the richer, more energetic, and progressive countries very different conditions prevail. Marriage is late and a certain proportion of men, and a still larger proportion of women (who exceed the men in the general population), never marry at all.

Before we consider the fateful significance of this fact of the growing proportion of adult unmarried women whose sexual relationships are unrecognized by the State and largely unrecognized altogether, it may be well to glance summarily at the two historical streams of tendency, both still in action among us, which affect the status of women, the one favouring the social equality of the sexes, the other favouring the social subjection of women. It is not difficult to trace these two streams both in conduct and opinion, in practical morality and in theoretical morality.

At one time it was widely held that in early states of society, before the establishment of the patriarchal stage which places women under the protection of men, a matriarchal stage prevailed in which women possessed supreme power. Bachofen, nearly a century ago, was the great champion of this view. He found a typical example of a matriarchal state among the ancient Lycians of Asia Minor with whom, Herodotus stated, the child takes the name of the mother, and follows her status, not that of the father. Such peoples, Bachofen believed, were gynæcocratic; power was in the hands of women. It can no longer be said that this opinion, in the form held by Bachofen, meets with any considerable support. As to the widespread prevalance of descent through the mother, there is no doubt whatever that it has prevailed very widely. But such descent through the mother, it has become recognized, by no means necessarily involves the power of the mother, and mother-descent may even be combined with a patriarchal system. There has even been a tendency to run to the opposite extreme from Bachofen and to deny that mother-descent conferred any special claim for consideration on women. That, however, seems scarcely in accordance with the evidence. The example of the Lycians is in point, for although, as reported by Herodotus, there is nothing to show that there was anything of the nature of a gynæcocracy in Lycia, women in all these regions of Asia Minor enjoyed high consideration and influence, traces of which may be detected in the

early literature and history of Christianity. A decisive example of the favourable influence of mother-descent on the status of woman is afforded by the *beena* marriage of early Arabia. Under such a system the wife is not only preserved from the subjection involved by purchase, which always casts upon her some shadow of the inferiority belonging to property, but she herself is the owner of the tent and the household property, and enjoys the dignity always involved by the possession of property and the ability to free herself from her husband.

It is also impossible to avoid connecting the primitive tendency to mother-descent, and the emphasis it involved on maternal rather than paternal generative energy, with the tendency to place the goddess rather than the god in the forefront of primitive pantheons, a tendency which cannot possibly fail to reflect honour on the sex to which the supreme deity belongs, and which may be connected with the large part which primitive women often play in the functions of religion. Thus, according to traditions common to the central tribes of Australia, the women formerly took a much greater share in the performance of sacred ceremonies which are now regarded as coming almost exclusively within the masculine province, and in at least one tribe which seems to retain ancient practices the women still actually take part in these ceremonies. It seems to have been much the same in Europe. We observe, too, both in the Celtic pantheon and among Mediterranean peoples, that while all the ancient divinities have receded into the dim background yet the goddesses there loom larger than the gods. In Ireland, where ancient custom and tradition have always been tenaciously preserved, women retained a high position, and much freedom both before and after marriage. " Every woman," it was said, " is to go the way she willeth freely," and after marriage she enjoyed a better position and greater freedom of divorce than was afforded either by the Christian Church or the English common law. There is less difficulty in recognizing that mother-descent was peculiarly favourable to the high status of women when we realize that even under very unfavourable conditions women have been able to exert great pressure on the men and to resist successfully the attempts to tyrannize over them.

In reaction against Bachofen's extreme conception of the primitive matriarchate an equally extreme opposed view of the dominating patriarchate was by many proclaimed. And then, again, in a new shape a primitive matriarchate system was emphasized by Briffault in his elaborate and erudite work, *The Mothers*, and he associated with it a kind of collective group motherhood though he could not accept the theory of primitive promiscuity. Briffault's conclusions were discussed at length and criticized by Westermarck in *Three Essays on Sex and Marriage.*

This old controversy around " mother-right " (as started nearly a

century ago by Bachofen) may now, however, be said to belong to the past, so that to many it seems that the very terms "mother-right" and "father-right" are out of date, and should not be used. It is hardly possible to find any society either purely patrilineal or purely matrilineal (that is to say with exclusive insistence on one line of descent) in relation to such factors as inheritance, succession, authority, or descent. The father, as Malinowski insists, is in either case an indispensable member of the household. What we find usually is a balance of the rights of paternal and maternal relatives with an emphasis on one side or the other. The position of women cannot be said to be either high or low without analysing it in relation to the whole social, legal, economic, and religious life of the people.[1]

"Her [woman's] position in West African society is very important indeed," says Torday, an authority of the first order. "She matters in every way. She figures less openly in public affairs than man, but her influence on tribal life is at least equal to his. Her traditional power is perpetuated mainly by her strong feeling of sympathy and community with members of her own sex, and a collective, though not individual, antagonism against the other. Neither her husband nor his family and clan ever acquire any authority over her. By marriage her husband acquires the usufruct of her sexual qualities and nothing more. Spiritually, politically, and economically she remains a member of her own clan. She resents, and effectively resists, all interference by mere man with matters affecting women. Litigations between women are settled in the first instance by female dignitaries; even the execution of a criminal woman used to be performed by a female executioner. The African woman's most effective weapon is the general strike; let one be offended by a man, and the whole womanhood of the community will side with her and maintain a separation *a toro et mensa* and a suspension of all household duties, including cooking, till the offender is severely punished. Not only were there women councillors; every kingdom had its queen-mother who, in the olden days, was the real head of the clan, delegating part of her powers to her male kinsman, the chief. In the newly-formed kingdoms her voice was weighty in the selection of a new king; she might proclaim him, crown him, or withhold the royal treasure from him till he had proved his worth. When a tribunal retired for deliberation it was said that the chiefs went to consult 'the old woman,' and it was in her name that judgment was pronounced. There were even, in the eighteenth century, queens in their own right and, though it would be incorrect to call them virgin queens, they never married

[1] See, for instance, J. H. Ronhaar, *Women in Primitive Mother-right Societies*, London, 1831. Although not entirely up-to-date, this work furnishes a valuable examination of various societies on which the old matriarchal theory was founded.

nor did they allow their Leicesters and Potemkins to interfere in matters of state."[1]

If we consider the status of woman in the great empires of antiquity we find on the whole that in their early stage, the stage of growth, as well as in their final stage, the stage of fruition, women tend to occupy a favourable position, while in their middle stage, usually the stage of predominating military organization on a patriarchal basis, women occupy a less favourable position. This cyclic movement seems to be almost a natural law of the development of great social groups. It was apparently well marked in the stable and orderly growth of Babylonia. In the earliest times a Babylonian woman had complete independence and equal rights with her brothers and her husband; later (as shown by the code of Hamurabi) a woman's rights, though not her duties, were more circumscribed; in the still later Neo-Babylonian periods, she again acquired equal rights with her husband.

In Egypt the position of women stood highest at the end, but it seems to have been high throughout the whole of the long course of Egyptian history, and continuously improving, while the fact that little regard was paid to prenuptial chastity and that marriage contracts placed no stress on virginity indicate the absence of the conception of woman as property. More than 3,500 years ago men and women were recognized as equal in Egypt. The high position of the Egyptian woman is significantly indicated by the fact that her child was never illegitimate; illegitimacy was not recognized even in the case of a slave woman's child. "It is the glory of Egyptian morality," says Amélineau, "to have been the first to express the Dignity of Woman." The idea of marital authority was altogether unknown. There can be no doubt that the high status of woman in two civilizations so stable, so long-lived, and so influential on human culture as Babylonia and Egypt, is a fact of much signifiance.

It may be pointed out—for it is not always realized—that even a stage of civilization which involves the subordination and subjection of woman and her rights really has its origin in the need for the protection of women, and is sometimes even a sign of the acquirement of new privileges by women. They are, as it were, locked up, not in order to deprive them of their rights, but in order to guard those rights. In the later more stable phase of civilization, when women are no longer exposed to the same dangers, this motive is forgotten and the guardianship of woman and her rights seems, and indeed has really become, a hardship rather than an advantage.

Of the status of women at Rome in the earliest periods we know little or nothing; the patriarchal system was already firmly established when Roman history begins to become clear and it involved strict

[1] E. Torday, "The Things that Matter to the West African," *Man*, June, 1931.

subordination of the woman to her father first and then to her husband. But nothing is more certain than that the status of women in Rome rose with the rise of civilization, as in Babylonia and in Egypt. In the case of Rome, however, the growing refinement of civilization, and the expansion of the Empire, were associated with the magnificent development of Roman law. In the last days of the Republic women already began to attain the same legal level as men, and later the great Antonine juris-consults, guided by their theory of natural law, reached towards a conception of the equality of the sexes as a principle of the code of equity. The patriarchal subordination of women fell into discredit, and this continued until, in the days of Justinian, under the influence of Christianity, the position of women began to suffer. In the best days the older forms of Roman marriage gave place to a form (apparently old but not hitherto considered reputable) which amounted in law to a temporary deposit of the woman by her family. She was independent of her husband (more especially as she came to him with her own dowry) and only nominally dependent on her family. Marriage was a private contract, accompanied by a religious ceremony if desired, and being a contract it could be dissolved, for any reason, in the presence of competent witnesses and with due legal forms, after the advice of the family council had been taken. Consent was the essence of this marriage and no shame, therefore, attached to its dissolution. Such a system is obviously more in harmony with modern civilized feeling than any system set up in Christendom.

In Rome, also, it is clear that this system was not a mere legal invention but the natural outgrowth of an enlightened public feeling in favour of the equality of men and women (clearly affirmed in the popular Stoic philosophy), often even in the field of sexual morality. Plautus, who makes the old slave Syra ask why there is not the same law in this respect for the husband as for the wife, had preceded the legist Ulpian who wrote: "It seems to be very unjust that a man demands chastity of his wife while he himself shows no example of it." The fact that these questions presented themselves to typical Roman men indicates the attitude towards women. In the final stage of Roman society the bond of the patriarchal system so far as women were concerned dwindled to a mere thread binding them to their fathers and leaving them quite free face to face with their husbands. "The Roman matron of the Empire," says Hobhouse, "was more fully her own mistress than the married woman of any earlier civilization, with the possible exception of a certain period of Egyptian history, and, it must be added, than the wife of any later civilization down to our own generation."

On the strength of the statements of two satirical writers, Juvenal and Tacitus, it has been supposed by many that Roman women of

the late period were given up to license. It is, however, idle to seek in satirists any balanced picture of a great civilization. Hobhouse concludes that, on the whole, Roman women worthily retained the position of their husbands' companions, counsellors, and friends which they had held when an austere system placed them legally in his power. Most authorities seem now to be of this opinion, though at an earlier period Friedländer expressed himself more dubiously. Thus Dill, in his judicious *Roman Society*, states that the Roman woman's position, both in law and in fact, rose during the Empire; without being less virtuous or respected, she became far more accomplished and attractive; with fewer restraints she had greater charm and influence, even in public affairs, and was more and more the equal of her husband. "In the last age of the Western Empire there is no deterioration in the position and influence of women." Donaldson, also, considers that there was no degradation of morals in the Roman Empire; "the licentiousness of Pagan Rome is nothing to the licentiousness of Christian Africa, Rome and Gaul, if we can put any reliance on the description of Salvian." Salvian's description of Christendom is probably exaggerated and one-sided, but exactly the same may be said in an even greater degree of the descriptions of ancient Rome left by clever Pagan satirists and ascetic Christian preachers. Plutarch is a more reliable guide.

It becomes necessary to leap over considerably more than a thousand years before we reach a stage of civilization in any degree approaching in height the final stage of Roman society. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, at first in France, then in England, we find once more the moral and legal movement tending towards the equalization of women with men.

The main European stream of influences in this matter within historical times has involved, we can scarcely doubt, the maintenance of an inequality to the disadvantage of women. The fine legacy of Roman law to Europe was indeed favourable to women, but that legacy was dispersed and for the most part lost in the more predominating influence of tenacious Teutonic custom associated with the vigorously organized Christian Church. Notwithstanding that the facts do not all point in the same direction, it seems evident that on the whole both Teutonic custom and Christian religion were unfavourable to the equality of women with men. Teutonic custom in this matter was determined by two decisive factors: (1) the existence of marriage by purchase which although, as Crawley pointed out, it by no means necessarily involves the degradation of women, certainly tends to place them in an inferior position, and (2) pre-occupation with war which is always accompanied by a depreciation of peaceful and feminine occupations and an indifference to love. Christianity was at its origin favourable to women because

it liberated and glorified the most essentially feminine emotions, but when it became an established and organized religion, with definitely ascetic ideals, its emotional tone grew unfavourable to women. It had from the first excluded them from any priestly function. It now regarded them as the special representatives of the despised element of sex in life. The eccentric Tertullian had once declared that woman was *janua Diaboli;* nearly 700 years later, even the gentle and philosophic Anselm wrote: *Femina fax est Satanæ.*

It is sometimes said that the Christian tendency to place women in an inferior spiritual position went so far that a Church Council formally denied that women have souls. This foolish story has indeed been repeated in a parrot-like fashion by a number of writers. The source of the story is probably to be found in the fact, recorded by Gregory of Tours, in his history (lib. viii, cap. XX), that at the Council of Mâcon, in 585, a bishop was in doubt as to whether the term "man" included woman, but was convinced by the other members of the Council that it did. The same difficulty has presented itself to lawyers in more modern times, and has not always been resolved so favourably to woman as by the Christian Council of Mâcon.

It was probably, however, not so much the Church as Teutonic customs and the development of the feudal system, with the masculine and military ideals it fostered, that was chiefly decisive in fixing the inferior position of women in the medieval world. Even the ideas of chivalry, which have often been supposed to be peculiarly favourable to women, so far as they affected women seem to have been of little practical significance. In his great work on chivalry Gautier brings forward much evidence to show that the feudal spirit, like the military spirit always and everywhere, on the whole involved at bottom a disdain for women, even though it occasionally idealized them. "Go into your painted and gilded rooms," we read in *Renaus de Montauban,* "sit in the shade, make yourselves comfortable, drink, eat, work tapestry, dye silk, but remember that you must not occupy yourselves with our affairs. Our business is to strike with the steel sword. Silence!" And if the woman insists she is struck on the face till the blood comes.

In England Pollock and Maitland do not believe that a life-long tutela of women ever existed as among other Teutonic peoples. "From the Conquest onwards," Hobhouse states, "the unmarried English woman, on attaining her majority, becomes fully equipped with all legal and civil rights, as much a legal personality as the Babylonian woman had been three thousand years before." But the developed English law more than made up for any privileges thus accorded to the unmarried by the inconsistent manner in which it swathed up the wife in endless folds of irresponsibility, except when she committed the supreme offence of injuring her lord and master.

Law and custom assumed that a woman should be more or less under the protection of a man, and even the ideals of fine womanhood which arose in this society, during feudal and later times, were necessarily tinged by the same conception. It involved the inequality of women as compared with men, but under the social conditions of a feudal society such inequality was to woman's advantage. Masculine force was the determining factor in life and it was necessary that every woman should have a portion of this force on her side. This sound and reasonable idea naturally tended to persist even after the growth of civilization rendered force a much less decisive factor in social life. In England in Queen Elizabeth's time no woman must be masterless, although the feminine subjects of Queen Elizabeth had in their sovereign the object-lesson of a woman who could play a brilliant and effective part in life and yet remain masterless. Still later, in the eighteenth century, even so fine a moralist as Shaftesbury, in his *Characteristics*, refers to lovers of married women as invaders of property. If such conceptions still ruled even in the best minds, it is not surprising that in the same and even the following century they were carried out into practice by less educated people who frankly bought and sold women.[1]

Custom and law are slowly changing in harmony with changed social conditions which no longer demand the subjection of women either in their own interests or in the interests of the community. Concomitantly with these changes a different ideal of womanly personality is developing. It is true that the ancient ideal of the lordship of the husband over the wife is still more or less consciously assumed. The husband frequently assumes to control her, even in personal matters having no direct concern with himself, by virtue of the old masculine prerogative of force which placed a woman under the hand, as the ancient patriarchal legists termed it, of a man. It is, however, becoming widely recognized that such a part is not suited to the modern man. The modern man, as Rosa Mayreder pointed out, is no longer equipped to play this domineering part in relation to his wife. The "noble savage," leading a wild life on mountain and in forest, hunting dangerous beasts and scalping enemies when necessary, may occasionally bring his club gently and effectively on to the head of his wife, even, it may be, with grateful appreciation on her part.[2] But the modern man, who for

[1] Schrader, in his *Reallexicon* (art "Brautkauf"), points out that, originally, the purchase of a wife was the purchase of her person, and not merely of the right of protecting her. The original conception probably persisted long in Great Britain on account of its remoteness from the centres of civilization. The Anglo-Saxon *fæll* applied to a wife first meant *what one may buy and sell*, then what is *valuable*, finally what is *dear*.

[2] Rasmussen (*People of the Polar North*, p. 56) describes a ferocious quarrel between husband and wife, who each in turn knocked the other down. "Somewhat later, when I peeped in, they were lying affectionately asleep, with the arms around each other."

the most part spends his days tamely at a desk, who has been trained to endure silently the insults and humiliations which superior officials or patronizing clients may inflict upon him, this typical modern man is no longer able to assume effectually the part of the "noble savage" when he returns to his home. He is indeed so unfitted for the part that his wife resents his attempts to play it. He is recognizing this, even apart from any consciousness of the general trend of civilization. The modern man of ideas recognizes that, as a matter of principle, his wife is entitled to equality with himself; the modern man of the world feels that it would be both ridiculous and inconvenient not to accord his wife much the same kind of freedom which he himself possesses. And, moreover, while the modern man has to some extent acquired feminine qualities, the modern woman has to a corresponding extent acquired masculine qualities.

Brief and summary as the preceding discussion has necessarily been, it will have served to bring us face to face with the central fact in the sexual morality which the growth of civilization has at the present day rendered inevitable: personal responsibility. "The responsible human being, man or woman, is the centre of modern ethics as of modern law"; that is the conclusion reached by Hobhouse in his discussion of the evolution of human morality.[1] The movement which is taking place among us to liberate sexual relationships from an excessive bondage to fixed and arbitrary regulations would have been impossible and mischievous but for the concomitant growth of a sense of personal responsibility in the members of the community. It could not indeed have subsisted for a single year without degenerating into licence and disorder. Freedom in sexual relations involves mutual trust and that can only rest on a basis of personal responsibility. Where there can be no reliance on personal responsibility there can be no freedom. In most fields of moral action this sense of personal responsibility is acquired at a fairly early stage of social progress. Sexual morality is the last field of morality to be brought within the sphere of personal responsibility. The community imposes the most varied, complicated, and artificial codes of sexual morality on its members, especially its feminine members, and, naturally enough, it is always very suspicious of their ability to observe these codes, and is careful to allow them, so far as possible, no personal responsibility in the matter. But a training in restraint, when carried through a long series of generations, may be the best preparation for freedom, the later generations becoming immunized, so as to acquire a certain degree of protection against the virus which would have destroyed the earlier generations.

It is necessary to bring forward this personal responsibility in

[1] Hobhouse, *Morals in Evolution*, vol. ii, p. 367.

matters of sexual morality, in the form in which it is making itself felt among us, and to bear in mind its implications even if we cannot at present develop them. The most important of these is undoubtedly economic independence. That is indeed so important that moral responsibility in any fine sense can scarcely be said to have any existence in its absence.' Moral responsibility and economic independence are indeed really identical; they are but two sides of the same social fact. The responsible person is the person who is able to answer for his actions and, if need be, to pay for them. His personal responsibility has little or no meaning except in so far as it is also economic independence.

In civilized societies, as they attain maturity, the women tend to acquire a greater and greater degree alike of moral responsibility and economic independence. Any freedom and seeming equality of women, even when it actually assumes the air of superiority, which is not so based, is unreal. It is only on sufferance; it is the freedom accorded to the child, because it asks for it so prettily or may scream if it is refused. This is merely parasitism. The basis of economic independence ensures a more real freedom. Even in societies which by law and custom hold women in strict subordination, the woman who happens to be placed in possession of property enjoys a high degree alike of independence and of responsibility. The growth of civilization seems indeed to be so closely identified with the economic freedom and independence of women that it is difficult to say which is cause and which effect. Herodotus, in his fascinating account of Egypt, a land which he regarded as admirable beyond all other lands, noted with surprise that, totally unlike the fashion of Greece, women left the men at home to the management of the loom and went to market to transact the business of commerce. It is the economic factor in social life which secures the moral responsibility of women and which chiefly determines the position of the wife in relation to her husband. In this respect in its late stages civilization returns to the same point it had occupied at the beginning, when, as has already been noted, we find greater equality with men and at the same time greater economic independence. This movement is the outward expression of the modern conception of personal rights, personal moral worth, and personal responsibility, which, as Hobhouse remarked, has compelled women to take their lives into their own hands, and has at the same time rendered the ancient marriage laws an anachronism, and the ancient ideals of feminine innocence shrouded from the world a mere piece of false sentiment.

Yet there can be no doubt that the entrance of women into the field of industrial work, in rivalry with men and under somewhat the same conditions as men, raises serious questions. The general tendency of civilization towards the economic independence and the moral

responsibility of women is unquestionable. But it is by no means clear that it is best for women, and, therefore, for the community, that women should exercise all the ordinary vocations and professions of men on the same level as men. Not only have the conditions of the vocations and professions developed in accordance with the special aptitudes of men, but the fact that the sexual processes by which the race is propagated demand an incomparably greater expenditure of time and energy on the part of women than of men, precludes women in the mass from devoting themselves so exclusively as men to industrial work. For some biologists, indeed, it seems clear that outside the home and the school women should not work at all. "Any nation that works its women is damned," said Woods Hutchinson. That view is extreme. Yet from the economic side also, many sociologists now regard the tendency of machine-industry to drive women away from the home as (in J. A. Hobson's words) "a tendency antagonistic to civilization." The neglect of the home is the worst injury modern industry has inflicted on our lives. Factory life is inconsistent with the position of a good mother, a good wife, or the maker of a home. It is now beginning to be recognized that the early pioneers of the "woman's movement" in working to remove the "subjection of woman" were still dominated by the old ideals of that subjection, according to which the masculine is in all main respects the superior sex. Whatever was good for man, they thought, must be equally good for woman. That has been the source of all that was unbalanced and unstable, sometimes both a little pathetic and a little absurd, in the old "woman's movement." There was a failure to perceive that, first of all, women must claim their right to their own womanhood as mothers of the race, and thereby the supreme lawgivers in the sphere of sex and the large part of life dependent on sex. This special position of woman requires a readjustment of economic conditions to their needs, though such readjustment must not affect their independence or their responsibility.

The question as to the method by which the economic independence of women will be completely insured, and the part which the community may be expected to take in insuring it, on the ground of woman's special child-bearing functions and her traditional domestic duties, is one of the greatest questions now facing civilization, and it cannot here be discussed. There can be no doubt, however, as to the reality of the movement in that direction, whatever doubt there may be as to its final adjustment. Here it is only necessary to touch on some of the general respects in which the growth of woman's responsibility is affecting sexual morality.

The first and most obvious way in which the sense of moral responsibility works is in an insistence on reality in the relationships of sex. Moral irresponsibility has too often combined with economic

dependence to induce a woman to treat the sexual event in her life which is biologically of most fateful gravity as a merely gay and trivial event, at the most an event which has given her a triumph over her rivals and over the superior male, who, on his part, willingly condescends, for the moment, to assume the part of the vanquished. " Gallantry to the ladies," we are told of Tom Jones, the hero of the greatest and most typical of English novels, " was among his principles of honour, and he held it as much incumbent on him to accept a challenge to love as if it had been a challenge to fight " ; he heroically goes home for the night with a lady of title he meets at a masquerade, though at the time very much in love with the girl whom he eventually marries. The woman whose power lies only in her charms, and who is free to allow the burden of responsibility to fall on a man's shoulder, could lightly play the seducing part, and thereby exert independence and authority in the only shapes open to her. The man on his part, introducing the misplaced idea of " honour " into the field from which the natural idea of responsibility has been banished, is prepared to descend at the lady's bidding into the arena, according to the old legend, and rescue the glove, even though he afterwards flings it contemptuously in her face. The ancient conception of gallantry, which Tom Jones so well embodies, is the direct outcome of a system involving the moral irresponsibility and economic dependence of women, and is as opposed to the conceptions, prevailing in the earlier and later civilized stages, of approximate sexual equality as it is to the biological traditions of natural courtship in the world generally.

In controlling her own sexual life, and in realizing that her responsibility for such control can no longer be shifted on to the shoulders of the other sex, women also indirectly affect the sexual lives of men, much as men have always affected the sexual lives of women. In what ways that influence is to be exerted has not always seemed clear. According to some, just as formerly men bought their wives and demanded pre-nuptial virginity in the article thus purchased, so in their turn women would demand premarital continence. That was too simple-minded a way of viewing the question. Women are not attracted to virginal innocence in men and frequently have good ground for viewing such innocence with suspicion. Yet it may well be believed that women will more and more prefer to exert a certain discrimination in the approval of their husbands' past lives. However instinctively a woman may desire that her husband shall be initiated in the art of making love to her, she may doubt whether the finest initiation is to be secured from the average prostitute. Prostitution has been in many respects an excellent arrangement, as is proved by the fact that it has flourished for so long a period, notwithstanding the influences antagonistic to it. But it is obviously only possible during a certain stage of civilization and in association with a certain

social organization. It is not completely congruous with a democratic stage of civilization involving the economic independence and the sexual responsibility of both sexes alike in all social classes. Women may realize this fact earlier than men.

It is also believed by many that women will realize that a high degree of moral responsibility is not easily compatible with the practice of dissimulation and that economic independence must deprive deceit—which is always the resort of the weak—of whatever moral justification it may possess. Here, however, it is necessary to speak with caution or we may be unjust to women. It must be remarked that in the sphere of sex men also are often weak, and are therefore apt to resort to the refuge of the weak. With the recognition of that fact we may also recognize that deception in women has been the cause of much of the age-long blunders of the masculine mind in the contemplation of feminine ways. Men have constantly committed the double error of overlooking the dissimulation of women and of over-estimating it. This fact has always served to render more difficult still the inevitably difficult course of women through the devious path of sexual behaviour. Pepys, who represents so vividly and so frankly the vices and virtues of the ordinary masculine mind, tells how one day when he called to see Mrs. Martin her sister Doll went out for a bottle of wine and came back indignant because a Dutchman had pulled her into a stable and tumbled and tossed her. Pepys having been himself often permitted to take liberties with her, it seemed to him that her indignation with the Dutchman was " the best instance of woman's falseness in the world." He assumes without question that a woman who has accorded the privilege of familiarity to a man she knows and, one hopes, respects, would be prepared to accept complacently the brutal attentions of the first drunken stranger she meets in the street.

It was the assumption of woman's falseness which led the ultra-masculine Pepys into a sufficiently absurd error. At this point, indeed, we encounter what has seemed to some a serious obstacle to the full moral responsibility of women. Dissimulation, Lombroso and Ferrero argued, is in woman " almost physiological," and they give various grounds for this conclusion. The theologians, on their side, have reached a similar conclusion. " A confessor must not immediately believe a woman's words," says Father Gury, " for women are habitually inclined to lie." This tendency, which seems to be commonly believed to affect women as a sex, however free from it a vast number of individual women are, may be said, and with truth, to be largely the result of the subjection of women and therefore likely to disappear as that subjection disappears. In so far, however, as it is " almost physiological," and based on radical feminine characters, such as modesty, affectability, and sympathy, which have

an organic basis in the feminine constitution and can therefore never altogether be changed, feminine dissimulation seems scarcely likely to disappear. The utmost that can be expected is that it should be held in check by the developed sense of moral responsibility, and, being reduced to its simply natural proportions, become recognizably intelligible. It is unnecessary to remark that there can be no question here as to any inherent moral superiority of one sex over the other.

It thus seems probable that the increase of moral responsibility may tend to make a woman's conduct more intelligible to others; it will in any case certainly tend to make it less the concern of others. This is emphatically the case as regards the relations of sex. In the past men have been invited to excel in many forms of virtue; only one virtue has been open to women. That is no longer possible. To place upon a woman the main responsibility for her own sexual conduct is to deprive that conduct of its conspicuously public character as a virtue or a vice. Sexual union, for a woman as much as for a man, is a physiological fact; it may also be a spiritual fact; but it is not a social act. It is, on the contrary, an act which, beyond all other acts, demands retirement and mystery for its accomplishment. That indeed is a general human, almost zoological, fact. Moreover, this demand of mystery is more especially made by woman in virtue of her greater modesty which, we have found reason to believe, has a biological basis. It is not until a child is born or conceived that the community has any right to interest itself in the sexual acts of its members. The sexual act is of no more concern to the community than any other private physiological act. It is an impertinence, if not an outrage, to seek to inquire into it. But the birth of the child is a social act. Not what goes into the womb but what comes out of it concerns society. The community is invited to receive a new citizen. It is entitled to demand that that citizen shall be worthy of a place in its midst and that he shall be properly introduced by a responsible father and a responsible mother. The whole of sexual morality, as Ellen Key said, revolves round the child.

At this final point in our discussion of sexual morality we may perhaps be able to realize the immensity of the change which has been involved by the development in women of moral responsibility. So long as responsibility was denied to women, so long as a father or a husband, backed up by the community, held himself responsible for a woman's sexual behaviour, for her "virtue," it was necessary that the whole of sexual morality should revolve around the entrance to the vagina. It became absolutely essential to the maintenance of morality that all eyes in the community should be constantly directed on to that point, and the whole marriage law had to be adjusted accordingly. That is no longer possible. When a woman assumes her own moral responsibility, in sexual as in other matters,

it becomes not only intolerable but meaningless for the community to pry into her most intimate physiological or spiritual acts. She is herself directly responsible to society as soon as she performs a social act, and not before.

With the realization of the moral responsibility of women the natural relations of life spring back to their due biological adjustment. Motherhood is restored to its natural sacredness. It becomes the concern of the woman herself, and not of society nor of any individual, to determine the conditions under which the child shall be conceived. Society is entitled to require that the father shall in every case acknowledge the fact of his paternity, but it must leave the chief responsibility for all the circumstances of child-production to the mother.

# CHAPTER X

## MARRIAGE

The Definition of Marriage—Marriage among Animals—The Predominance of Monogamy—Monogamy a Natural Fact, not Based on Human Law—The Tendency to Place the Form of Marriage above the Fact of Marriage—The History of Marriage—Marriage in Ancient Rome—Germanic Influence on Marriage—Bride-Sale—The Ring—The Influence of Christianity on Marriage—Origin and Growth of the Sacramental Conception—The Church made Marriage a Public Act—Canon Law—Its Sound Core—Its Development—Its Confusions and Absurdities—Peculiarities of English Marriage Law—Influence of the Reformation on Marriage—The Protestant Conception of Marriage as a Secular Contract—The Puritan Reform of Marriage—Milton as a Pioneer of Marriage Reform—His Views on Divorce—The Backward Position of England in Marriage Reform—Criticism of the English Divorce Law—Traditions of the Canon Law Still Persistent—The Question of Damages for Adultery—Collusion as a Bar to Divorce—Impossibility of Deciding by Statute the Causes for Divorce—Divorce by Mutual Consent—Its Origin and Development—Impeded by the Traditions of Canon Law—Modern Advocates of Divorce by Mutual Consent—The Arguments Against Facility of Divorce—The Interests of the Children—The Protection of Women—The Present Tendency of the Divorce Movement—Marriage not a Contract but a Fact—Legal Disabilities and Disadvantages in the Position of the Husband and the Wife—Only the Non-Essentials of Marriage a Proper Matter for Contract—Contracts of the Person Opposed to Modern Tendencies—The Factor of Moral Responsibility—Marriage as an Ethical Sacrament—Personal Responsibility Involves Freedom—Freedom the Best Guarantee of Stability—False Ideas of Individualism—Modern Tendency of Marriage—With the Birth of a Child Marriage Ceases to be a Private Concern—Every Child must have a Legal Father and Mother—How this can be Effected—The Firm Basis of Monogamy—The Question of Marriage Variations—Such Variations not Inimical to Monogamy—The Flexibility of Marriage holds Variations in Check—Marriage on a Reasonable and Humane Basis—Summary and Conclusion.

THE discussion in the previous chapter of the nature of sexual morality, with the brief sketch it involved of the direction in which that morality is moving, has necessarily left many points vague. It may still be asked what definite and precise forms sexual unions are tending to take among us, and what relation these unions bear to the religious, social, and legal traditions we have inherited. These are matters about which a considerable amount of uncertainty seems to prevail, for it is not unusual to hear revolutionary or eccentric opinions concerning them.

Sexual union, involving the cohabitation, temporary or permanent, of two or more persons, and having for one of its chief ends the production and care of offspring, is commonly termed marriage. As defined by Westermarck in his classic *History*, human marriage is " the relation of one or more men to one or more women which is

recognized by custom or law and involves certain rights and duties both in the case of the parties entering the union and in the case of the children born of it."[1] Briffault would wish to make clear that the relation is economic as well as sexual, but Westermarck has elsewhere stated that he regards marriage as "an economic institution" and would certainly regard that aspect as included in the "relation." The group so constituted forms a family. This is the sense in which the words "marriage" and the "family" are most properly used, whether we speak of animals or of Man. There is thus seen to be room for variation as regards both the time during which the union lasts, and the number of individuals who form it, the chief factor in the determination of these points being the interests of the offspring. In actual practice, however, sexual unions, not only in Man but among the higher animals, tend to last beyond the needs of the offspring of a single season, while the fact that in most species the numbers of males and females are approximately equal makes it inevitable that both among animals and in Man the family is produced by a single sexual couple, that is to say that monogamy is, with however many exceptions, necessarily the fundamental rule.

It will be thus seen that marriage centres in the child, and has at the outset no reason for existence apart from the welfare of the offspring. Among those animals of lowly organization which are able to provide for themselves from the beginning of existence there is no family and no need of marriage. Among human races, when sexual unions are not followed by offspring, there may be other reasons for the continuance of the union but they are not reasons in which either Nature or society is in the slightest degree directly concerned. The marriage which grew up among animals on the basis of natural selection, and which has been continued by the lower human races through custom and tradition, by the more civilized races through the superimposed regulative influence of legal institutions, has been marriage for the sake of the offspring. Even in civilized races among whom the proportion of sterile marriages is large, marriage tends to be so constituted as always to assume the procreation of children and to involve the permanence required by such procreation.

Freedom of intercourse, as Malinowski insists, though not universal, is generally prevalent in human societies; freedom of conception is never allowed, except under very exceptional circumstances. So that, as the same authority puts it, all the facts of sexuality, marriage, family, and clanship go to make up one integral institution: the Procreative Institution of mankind.

There has long been a dispute among the historians of marriage as to the first form of human marriage. Some assume a primitive

[1] Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage*, fifth edition, re-written, in three volumes, 1921.

promiscuity gradually modified in the direction of monogamy. This opinion was once widely held, perhaps especially in Germany, but is now for the most part discarded. Even Briffault, who asserts a wide degree of systematic sexual communism with predominance of the maternal element, rejects primitive promiscuity. Westermarck, who admits having been at the outset favourable to the theory of primitive promiscuity, has most thoroughly and elaborately explored the question in several chapters of the first volume of his *History of Human Marriage,* and altogether denies a stage of promiscuity. At the present day there are few, if any, savage peoples living in genuine unrestricted sexual promiscuity. It would seem, indeed, possible that the great forward step involved in passing from ape to man was associated with a change in sexual habits involving the temporary adoption of a complex system. It is difficult to see in what other social field than that of sex primitive man could find exercise for the developing intellectual and moral aptitudes, the subtle distinctions and moral restraints, which the simple monogamy practised by animals could afford no scope for. It is also equally difficult to see on what basis other than that of a more complex associated sexual system the combined and harmonious efforts needed for social progress could have developed. It is probable that at least one of the motives for exogamy, or marriage outside the group, is (as was probably first pointed out by St. Augustine in his *De Civitate Dei*) the need of creating a larger social circle, and so facilitating social activities and progress. Exactly the same end is effected by a complex marriage system binding a large number of people together by common interests. The strictly small and confined monogamic family, however excellently it subserved the interests of the offspring, contained no promise of a wider social progress. We see this among both ants and bees, who of all animals have attained the highest social organization; their progress was only possible through a profound modification of the systems of sexual relationship. As Espinas said many years ago (in his suggestive work, *Des Sociétés Animales*): "The cohesion of the family and the probabilities for the birth of societies are inverse." Or, as Schurtz more recently pointed out, although individual marriage has prevailed more or less from the first, early social institutions, early ideas, and early religion involved sexual customs which modified a strict monogamy.

The chief form of complex human marriage which has been put forward as primitive is what is called group-marriage, in which all the women of one class are regarded as the actual, or at all events potential, wives of all the men in another class. This has been observed among some central Australian tribes, a people as primitive and as secluded from external influence as could well be found, and there is evidence to show that it was formerly more widespread among them. "In

the Urabunna tribe, for example," say Spencer and Gillen, " a group of men actually do have, continually, and as a normal condition, marital relations with a group of women." This system, they held, served to bind more or less closely together groups of individuals who are mutually interested in one another's welfare, and so has been one of the most powerful agents in the early stages of the upward development of the human race. Thomas, in his book on *Kinship and Marriage in Australia* (1908), concluded that group-marriage in Australia has not been demonstrated, and Westermarck maintains a sceptical opinion in regard to group-marriage generally; he thinks the Urabunna custom may have developed out of ordinary individual marriage, and regards the group-marriage theory as the " residuary legatee of the old theory of promiscuity." Durkheim also believed that the Australian marriage system is not primitive. With the attainment of a certain level of social progress a wide and complicated system of sexual relationships ceases to have its value, and a more or less qualified monogamy tends to prevail as more in harmony with the claims of social stability and executive masculine energy. Howitt agreed with Spencer and Gillen, and Frazer takes a somewhat similar view, while in Germany Kohler and many others have accepted group-marriage. The classificatory system of marriage relationships has frequently carried weight as evidence of earlier group-marriage since it could be regarded as a relic of it. Briffault in two erudite chapters on " group-marriage and sexual communism " of *The Mothers* accepts group-marriage as an established fact, though entirely opposed to any theory of primitive promiscuity as being as remote as possible from " the elaborate sexual organization of primitive society."

There is now, however, a tendency to drop the term " group marriage." W. H. R. Rivers, who gave much attention to the subject, in his *Kinship and Social Organization* (1914) concludes: " I think it desirable to throw aside the term 'group-marriage,' as only confusing the issue and to speak rather of a state of organized sexual communism in which sexual relations are recognized as orthodox between the men of one social group and the women of another." He accepted the classificatory system as evidence of such former relations and believed that evidence from Melanesia places it beyond question, though he would not assert it had been universal or been the earliest phase of social evolution. More recently, in the final edition of his *History of Human Marriage*, Westermarck elaborately re-examines this view, and concludes that it is " a mere guess," and that even if we admit its existence in some regions there is no evidence for its universality.

It is necessary to make allowance for variations, thereby shunning the extreme theorists who insist on moulding all facts to their theories, but we may conclude that—as the approximately equal number of

the sexes indicats—in the human species, as among many of the higher animals, a more or less permanent monogamy has on the whole tended to prevail. That is a fact of great significance in its implications. For we have to realize that we are here in the presence of a natural fact. Sexual relationships, in human as in animal societies, follow a natural law, oscillating on each side of the norm, and there is no place for the theory that that law was imposed artificially. If all artificial "laws" could be abolished the natural order of the sexual relationships would continue to subsist substantially as at present. Virtue, said Cicero, is but Nature carried out to the utmost. Or, as Holbach put it, arguing that our institutions tend whither Nature tends, "art is only Nature acting by the help of the instruments she has herself made." Shakespeare had already seen much the same truth when he said that the art which adds to Nature "is an art that Nature makes." Law and religion have buttressed monogamy; it is not based on them but on the needs and customs of mankind, and these constitute its completely adequate sanctions. Or, as Cope put it, marriage is not the creation of law but the law is its creation. Crawley, again, throughout his study of primitive sex relationships, emphasized the fact that our formal marriage system is not, as so many religious and moral writers once supposed, a forcible repression of natural impulses, but merely the rigid crystallization of those natural impulses, which in a more fluid form have been in human nature from the first. "Culture emphasizes rather than overrides," says again Malinowski, "the natural impulse." Our conventional forms, we must believe, have not introduced any element of value, while in some respects they have been mischievous.

It is necessary, also, to bear in mind that the conclusion that monogamic marriage is natural, and represents an order which is in harmony with the instincts of the majority of people, by no means involves agreement with the details of any particular legal system of monogamy. Monogamic marriage is a natural biological fact, alike in many animals and in man. But no system of legal regulation is a natural biological fact. When we hear that "there is only one natural mode of gratifying sexual *nisus* and reproductive instinct, that of marriage," the statement requires considerable exegesis before it can be accepted, or even receive an intelligible meaning, and if we are to understand by "marriage" the particular form and implications of the English marriage law, or even of the somewhat more enlightened Scotch law, the statement is absolutely false. There is a world of difference, as J. A. Godfrey remarks, between natural monogamous marriage and our legal system; "the former is the outward expression of the best that lies in the sexuality of man; the latter is a creation in which religious and moral superstitions have played a most important part, not always to the benefit of

individual and social health." With the acceptance of the tendency to monogamy we are not at the end of sexual morality, but only at the beginning. It is not monogamy that is the main thing, but the kind of lives that people lead in monogamy. The mere acceptance of a monogamic rule carries us but a little way. That is a fact which cannot fail to impress itself on those who approach the questions of sex from the psychological side.

If monogamy is thus firmly based it is unreasonable to fear, or to hope for, any radical modification in the institution of marriage, regarded, not under its temporary religious and legal aspects but as an order which appeared on the earth even earlier than man. Monogamy is the most natural expression of an impulse which cannot, as a rule, be so adequately realized in full fruition under conditions involving a less prolonged period of mutual communion and intimacy. Variations, regarded as inevitable oscillations around the norm, are also natural, but union in couples must always be the rule because the numbers of the sexes are always approximately equal, while the needs of the emotional life, even apart from the needs of offspring, demand that such unions based on mutual attraction should be so far as possible permanent.

It must here again be repeated that it is the reality, and not the form or the permanence of the marriage union, which is essential. It is not the legal or religious formality which sanctifies marriage, it is the reality of the marriage which sanctifies the form. Fielding has satirized in Nightingale, Tom Jones's friend, the shallow-brained view of connubial society which degrades the reality of marriage to exalt the form. Nightingale has the greatest difficulty in marrying a girl with whom he has already had sexual relations, although he is the only man who has had relations with her. To Jones's arguments he replies : " Common-sense warrants all you say, but yet you well know that the opinion of the world is so contrary to it, that were I to marry a whore, though my own, I should be ashamed of ever showing my face again." It cannot be said that Fielding's satire is even yet out of date.

It may seem to some that so conservative an estimate of the tendencies of civilization in matters of sexual love is due to a timid adherence to mere tradition. That is not the case. We have to recognize that marriage is firmly held in position by the pressure of two opposing forces. There are two currents in the stream of civilization : one that moves towards an ever greater social order and cohesion, the other that moves towards an ever greater individual freedom. There is real harmony underlying the apparent opposition of these two tendencies, and each is indeed the indispensable complement of the other. There can be no real freedom for the individual in the things that concern that individual alone unless there is a

coherent order in the things that concern him as a social unit. Marriage in one of its aspects only concerns the two individuals involved ; in another of its aspects it chiefly concerns society. The two forces cannot combine to act destructively on marriage, for the one counteracts the other. They combine to support monogamy, in all essentials, on its immemorial basis.

It must be added that in the circumstances of monogamy that are not essential there always has been, and always must be, perpetual transformation. All traditional institutions, however firmly founded on natural impulses, are always growing dead and rigid at some points and putting forth vitally new growths at other points. It is the effort to maintain their vitality, and to preserve their elastic adjustment to the environment, which involves this process of transformation in non-essentials.

The only way in which we can fruitfully approach the question of the value of the transformations now taking place in our marriage-system is by considering the history of that system in the past. In that way we learn the real significance of the marriage-system, and we understand what transformations are, or are not, associated with a fine civilization. When we are acquainted with the changes of the past we are enabled to face more confidently the changes of the present.

The history of the marriage-system of modern civilized peoples begins in the later days of the Roman Empire at the time when the foundations were being laid of that Roman law which has exerted so large an influence in Christendom. Reference has already been made to the significant fact that in late Rome women had acquired a position of considerable independence in relation to their husbands, while the patriarchal authority still exerted over them by their fathers had become, for the most part, almost nominal. This high status of women was associated, as it naturally tends to be, with a high degree of freedom in the marriage system.

The Romans recognized that marriage is a fact and not a mere legal form ; in marriage by *usus* there was no ceremony at all ; it was constituted by the mere fact of living together for a whole year ; yet such marriage was regarded as just as legal and complete as if it had been inaugurated by the sacred rite of *confarreatio*. Marriage was a matter of simple private agreement in which the man and the woman approached each other on a footing of equality. The wife retained full control of her own property ; the barbarity of admitting an action for restitution of conjugal rights was impossible, divorce was a private transaction to which the wife was as fully entitled as the husband, and it required no inquisitorial intervention of magistrate or court ; Augustus ordained, indeed, that a public declaration was necessary, but the divorce itself was a private legal act of the two persons concerned. We may not indeed assume that the disappearance of

the old strict subordination of wife to husband had been replaced by a close and equal partnership. H. F. Pelham remarks that it failed to secure for married women " a healthy social position and influence." Augustus, also, made marriage a compulsory institution, alike for men and women, compelled widows and divorced women to remarry and mulcted the childless, furnishing a model which Mussolini has sought to imitate.

In the chaos that followed the dissolution of the Empire Roman law remained indeed as a legacy to the new developing nations, but its influence was inextricably mingled with that of Christianity, which, though not at the first anxious to set up marriage laws of its own, gradually revealed a growing ascetic feeling hostile alike to the dignity of the married woman and the freedom of marriage and divorce. With that influence was combined the influence, introduced through the Bible, of the barbaric Jewish marriage-system conferring on the husband rights in marriage and divorce which were totally denied to the wife ; this was an influence which gained still greater force at the Reformation when the authority once accorded to the Church was largely transferred to the Bible. Finally, there was in a great part of Europe, including the most energetic and expansive parts, the influence of the Germans, an influence still more primitive than that of the Jews, involving the conception of the wife as almost her husband's chattel, and marriage as a purchase. All these influences clashed and often appeared side by side, though they could not be harmonized.

At first indeed the influence of Rome continued in some degree to prevail and even exhibited new developments. In the time of the Christian Emperors freedom of divorce by mutual consent was alternately maintained, and abolished.[1] We even find the wise and far-seeing provision of the law enacting that a contract of the two parties never to separate could have no legal validity. Justinian's prohibition of divorce by consent led to much domestic unhappiness, and even crime, which appears to be the reason why it was immediately abrogated by his successor. Theodosius, still maintaining the late Roman tradition of the moral equality of the sexes, allowed the wife equally with the husband to obtain a divorce for adultery ; that is a point we have only attained in England to-day.

It seems to be admitted on all sides that it was largely the influence

[1] Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, enacted a strict and peculiar divorce law (allowing a wife to divorce her husband only when he was a homicide, a poisoner, or a violator of sepulchres), which could not be maintained. In 497, therefore, Anastasius decreed divorce by mutual consent. This was abolished by Justinian, who only allowed divorce for various specified causes, among them, however, including the husband's adultery. These restrictions proved unworkable, and Justinian's successor and nephew, Justin, restored divorce by mutual consent. Finally, in 870, Leo the Philosopher returned to Justinian's enactment.

of the irruption of the barbarous Germans which degraded, when it failed to sweep away, the conception of marriage slowly moulded by the organizing genius of the Romans into a great tradition. The influence of Christianity had at the first no degrading influence of this kind; for the ascetic ideal was not yet predominant, priests married as a matter of course, and there was no difficulty in accepting the marriage order established in the secular world; it was even possible to add to it a new vitality and freedom. But the Germans went beyond even the early Romans in the subjection of their wives; they allowed indeed to their unmarried girls a large measure of indulgence and even sexual freedom, but the German marriage system placed the wife in a condition little better than that of a domestic slave. In one form or another, under one disguise or another, the system of wife-purchase prevailed among the Germans, and, whenever that system is influential, even when the wife is honoured her privileges are diminished. Among the Teutonic peoples generally, as among the early English, marriage was indeed a private transaction but it took the form of a sale of the bride by the father, or other legal guardian, to the bridegroom. The *beweddung* was a contract of sale.[1] "Sale-marriage" was the most usual form of marriage. The ring, indeed, probably was not in origin, as some have supposed, a mark of servitude, but rather a form of bride-price, or *arrha,* that is to say, earnest money on the contract of marriage and so the symbol of it. At first a sign of the bride's purchase, it was not till later that the ring acquired the significance of subjection to the bridegroom, and that significance, later in the Middle Ages, was further emphasized by other ceremonies. Thus in England the York and Sarum manuals in some of their forms direct the bride, after the delivery of the ring, to fall at her husband's feet, and sometimes to kiss his right foot. In Russia, also, the bride kissed her husband's feet. At a later period, in France, this custom was attenuated and it became customary for the bride to let the ring fall in front of the altar and then stoop at her husband's feet to pick it up. It may be added that the idea of the subordination of the wife to the husband appeared in the Christian Church at a somewhat early period, and no doubt independently of Germanic influences; St. Augustine said (Sermo XXXVII, cap. vi) that a good *materfamilias* must not be ashamed to call herself her husband's servant (*ancilla*).

[1] It would appear, however, that the "bride-sale," of which Tacitus speaks, was not strictly the sale of a chattel nor of a slave-girl, but the sale of the *mund* or protectorship over the girl. It is true the distinction may not always have been clear to those who took part in the transaction. Similarly, the Anglo-Saxon betrothal was not so much a payment of the bride's price to her kinsmen, although as a matter of fact they might make a profit out of the transaction, as a covenant stipulating for the bride's honourable treatment as wife and widow. Reminiscences of this, remark Pollock and Maitland, may be found in "that curious cabinet of antiquities, the marriage ritual of the English Church."

It appears to have been in the fourteenth century that the word "obey" began to appear in some English marriage services, though Wickham Legg thinks it may have come into use earlier, and the bride promised to be "buxom," which at that time meant obedient and submissive. In many French, Spanish, and other rituals, however, there is no promise to obey. The Christian Church at the beginning accepted the forms of marriage already existing in those countries in which it found itself, the Roman forms in the lands of Latin tradition and the German forms in Teutonic lands. It merely demanded that they should be hallowed by priestly benediction, though the marriage was recognised by the Church even in the absence of such benediction. There was no special religious marriage service, either in the East or the West, earlier than the sixth century. It was simply the custom for the married couple, after the secular ceremonies were completed, to attend the church, listen to the ordinary service, and take the sacrament. A special marriage service was developed slowly, and it was no part of the real marriage.

Liturgical scholars consider that the first description of a Christian marriage is contained in the Answer to the Bulgarians of Nicolas I, Roman Pontiff from 858 to 867, and he stated that consent is of the essence of marriage.

During the tenth century (at all events in Italy and France) it was beginning to become customary to celebrate the first part of the real nuptials, still a purely temporal act, outside the church door. Soon this was followed by the regular bride-mass, directly applicable to the occasion, inside the church. By the twelfth century the priest directed the ceremony, now involving an imposing ritual, which began outside the church and ended with the bridal mass inside. By the thirteenth century, the priest, superseding the guardians of the young couple, himself officiated through the whole ceremony. Up to that time marriage had been a purely private business transaction. Thus, after more than a millennium of Christianity, not by law but by the slow growth of custom, ecclesiastical marriage was established.

It was undoubtedly an event of great importance, not merely for the Church but for the whole history of European marriage even down to to-day. The whole of our public method of celebrating marriage to-day is based on that of the Catholic Church as established in the twelfth century and formulated in the Canon law. Even the publication of banns has its origin here, and the fact that in our modern civil marriage the public ceremony takes place in an office and not in a Church may disguise but cannot alter the fact that it is the direct and unquestionable descendant of the public ecclesiastical ceremony which embodied the slow and subtle triumph—so slow and subtle that its history is difficult to trace—of Christian priests over the private affairs of men and women. Before they set themselves to

this task marriage everywhere was the private business of the persons concerned; when they had completed their task—and it was not absolutely complete until the Council of Trent—a private marriage had become a sin and almost a crime.[1]

It may seem a matter for surprise that the Church which, as we know, had shown an ever greater tendency to reverence virginity and to cast contumely on the sexual relationship, should yet, parallel with that movement and with the growing influence of asceticism, have shown so great an anxiety to capture marriage and to confer on it a public, dignified, and religious character. There was, however, no contradiction. The factors that were constituting European marriage, taken as a whole, were indeed of diverse character and often involved unreconciled contradictions. But so far as the central efforts of the ecclesiastical legislators were concerned, there was a definite and intelligible point of view. The very depreciation of the sexual instinct involved the necessity, since the instinct could not be uprooted, of constituting for it a legitimate channel, so that ecclesiastical matrimony was, as Haynes put it, "analogous to a licence to sell intoxicating liquors." Moreover, matrimony exhibited the power of the Church to confer on the licence a dignity and distinction which would clearly separate it from the general stream of lust. Sexual enjoyment is impure, the faithful cannot partake of it until it has been purified by the ministrations of the Church. The solemnization of marriage was the necessary result of the sanctification of virginity. It became necessary to sanctify marriage also, and hence was developed the indissoluble sacrament of matrimony. The conception of marriage as a religious sacrament, a conception of far-reaching influence, is the contribution of the Catholic Church to the history of marriage.

The Catholic conception of marriage, however, was, it is clear, in essentials precisely the primitive conception. Christianity drew the sacramental idea from the archaic traditions in popular consciousness, and its own ecclesiastical contribution lay in slowly giving that idea a formal and rigid shape, and in declaring it indissoluble. As among savages, it was in the act of consent that the essence of the sacrament lay; the intervention of the priest was not, in principle, necessary to give marriage its religiously binding character. The essence of the sacrament was mutual acceptance of each other by the man and the woman, as husband and wife, and technically the priest who presided at the ceremony was simply a witness of the sacrament. The essential fact being thus the mental act of consent, the sacrament of matrimony had the peculiar character of being without any outward and visible sign.

[1] Any later changes in Catholic Canon law have merely been in the direction of making matrimony still narrower and still more remote from the practice of the world. By a papal decree of 1907, civil marriages and marriages in non-Catholic places of worship are declared to be not only sinful and unlawful (which they were before), but actually null and void.

Perhaps it was this fact, felt as a weakness, which led to the emphasis on the indissolubility of the sacrament of marriage, already established by St. Augustine, though it was not until 1164, in Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, that a formal recognition is found of matrimony as one of the seven sacraments.

The Church, however, had not only made marriage a religious act; it had also made it a public act. The officiating priest, who had now become the arbiter of marriage, was bound by all the injunctions and prohibitions of the Church, and he could not allow himself to bend to the inclinations and interests of individual couples or their guardians. It was inevitable that in this matter, as in other similar matters, a code of ecclesiastical regulations should be gradually developed for his guidance. This need of the Church, due to its growing control of the world's affairs, was the origin of Canon law. With the development of Canon law the whole field of the regulation of the sexual relationships, and the control of its aberrations, became an exclusively ecclesiastical matter. The secular law could take no more direct cognizance of adultery than of fornication or masturbation; bigamy, incest and sodomy were not temporal crimes; the Church was supreme in the whole sphere of sex.

It was during the twelfth century that Canon law developed, and Gratian was the master mind who first moulded it. He belonged to the Bolognese school of jurisprudence, which had inherited the traditions of Roman law. The Canons which Gratian compiled were, however, no more the mere result of legal traditions than they were the outcome of cloistered theological speculation. They were the result of a response to the practical needs of the day before those needs had had time to form a system for fine-spun subtleties. At a somewhat later period, before the close of the century, the Italian jurists were vanquished by the Gallic theologians of Paris as represented by Peter Lombard. The result was the introduction of mischievous complexities which went far to rob Canon law alike of its certainty and its adaptation to human necessities.

Notwithstanding, however, all the parasitic accretions which swiftly began to form round the Canon law and to entangle its practical activity, that legislation embodied—predominantly at the outset and more obscurely throughout its whole period of vital activity—a sound core of real value. The Canon law recognized at the outset that the essential fact of marriage is the actual sexual union, accomplished with the intention of inaugurating a permanent relationship. The *copula carnalis*, the making of two "one flesh," according to the Scriptural phrase, a mystic symbol of the union of the Church to Christ, was the essence of marriage, and the mutual consent of the couple alone sufficed to constitute marriage, even without any religious benediction, or without any ceremony at all. The formless and

unblessed union was still a real and binding marriage if the two parties had willed it so to be.[1]

Whatever hard things may be said about the Canon law, it must never be forgotten that it carried through the Middle Ages until the middle of the sixteenth century the great truth that the essence of marriage lies not in rites and forms, but in the mutual consent of the two persons who marry each other. When the Catholic Church, in its growing rigidity, lost that conception, it was taken up by the Protestants and Puritans in their first stage of ardent vital activity, though it was more or less dropped as they fell back into a state of subservience to forms. It continued to be maintained by moralists and poets. Thus George Chapman, the dramatist, who was both moralist and poet, in *The Gentleman Usher* (1606), represents the riteless marriage of his hero and heroine, and asks whether " outward rites " could be

> " More virtuous than the very substance is
> Of holy nuptials solemnized within ? "

The establishment of marriage on this sound and naturalistic basis had the further excellent result that it placed the man and the woman who could thus constitute marriage by their consent in entire disregard of the wishes of their parents or families, on the same moral level. Here the Church was following alike the later Romans and the early Christians like Lactantius and Jerome, who had declared that what was licit for a man was licit for a woman. The Penitentials also attempted to set up this same moral law for both sexes. The Canonists finally allowed a certain supremacy to the husband, though, on the other hand, they sometimes seemed to assign even the chief part of marriage to the wife.

The sound elements in the Canon law conception of marriage were, however, from an early period largely if not altogether neutralized by the verbal subtleties by which they were overlaid, and even by its own fundamental original defects. Even in the thirteenth century it began to be possible to attach a superior force to marriage verbally formed *per verba de præsenti* than to one constituted by sexual union, while so many impediments to marriage were set up that it became difficult to know what marriages were valid, an important point since a marriage even innocently contracted within the prohibited degrees was only a putative marriage. The most serious and the most profoundly unnatural feature of this ecclesiastical conception of marriage was the flagrant contradiction between the extreme facility with which the gate of marriage was flung open to the young couple, even if they

[1] It was the Council of Trent, in the sixteenth century, which made ecclesiastical rites essential to binding marriage ; but even then fifty-six prelates voted against that decision.

were little more than children, and the extreme rigor with which it was locked and bolted when they were inside. That is still the defect of the marriage system we have inherited from the Church, but in the hands of the Canonists it was emphasized both on the side of facility for entrance and of difficulty for exit.[1] Alike from the standpoint of reason and of humanity the gate that is easy of ingress must be easy of egress ; or if the exit is necessarily difficult then extreme care should be taken in admission. But neither of these necessary precautions was possible to the Canonists. Matrimony was a sacrament and all must be welcome to a sacrament, the more so since otherwise they may be thrust into the mortal sin of fornication. On the other side, since matrimony was a sacrament, when once truly formed, beyond the permissible power of verbal quibbles to invalidate, it could never be abrogated. The very institution that, in the view of the Church, had been set up as a bulwark against license became itself an instrument for artificially creating license. So that the net result of the Canon law in the long run was the production of a state of things which—in the eyes of a large part of Christendom—more than neutralized the soundness of its original conception.

In England, where from the ninth century marriage was generally accepted by the ecclesiastical and temporal powers as indissoluble, Canon law was, in the main, established as in the rest of Christendom. There were, however, certain points in which Canon law was not accepted by the law of England. By English law a ceremony before a priest was necessary to the validity of a marriage, though in Scotland the Canon law doctrine was accepted that simple consent of the parties, even exchanged secretly, sufficed to constitute marriage. The Proceedings of the Bishop of London's Court in the fifteenth century show the ecclesiastical insistence on the observance of Canon law. Thus (as recorded in Hale's *Precedents and Proceedings*) in 1489 a man cited for the " crime " of adultery was fined, for redemption of penance, three shillings and fourpence ; while a couple who had lived together for two years without being married had to pay double for redemption of penance, six shillings and eightpence.

The appearance of Luther and the Reformation involved the decay

[1] It is sometimes said that the Catholic Church is able to diminish the evils of its doctrine of the indissolubility of marriage by the number of impediments to marriage it admits, thus affording free scope for dispensations from marriage. This scarcely seems to be the case. Dr. P. J. Hayes, speaking with authority as Chancellor of the Catholic Archdiocese of New York, stated that even in so modern and so mixed a community as this there are few applications for dispensation on account of impediments ; out of 15,000 Catholic marriages per annum in New York City, scarcely five per annum are questioned as to validity, and these chiefly on the ground of bigamy. For the Roman Catholic world in general the official documents (whether or not complete) of matrimonial cases coming before the Tribunal of the Rota (the Papal court) in Rome show extremely few applications for nullity, and these are often refused.

of the Canon law system so far as Europe as a whole was concerned. It was for many reasons impossible for the Protestant reformers to retain formally either the Catholic conception of matrimony or the precariously elaborate legal structure which the Church had built up on that conception. It can scarcely be said, however, that the Protestant attitude towards the Catholic idea of matrimony was altogether clear, logical, or consistent. It was a revolt, an emotional impulse, rather than a matter of reasoned principle. In its inevitable necessity, under the circumstances of the rise of Protestantism, lies its justification, and, on the whole, its wholesome soundness. It took the form, which may seem strange in a religious movement, of proclaiming that marriage is not a religious but a secular matter. Marriage is, said Luther, "a worldly thing," and Calvin put it on the same level as house-building, farming, or shoemaking. But while this secularization of marriage represents the general drift of Protestantism, the leaders were themselves not altogether confident and clear-sighted in the matter. Even Luther was a little confused on this point; sometimes he seems to call marriage "a sacrament," sometimes, and more often, "a temporal business," to be left to the State. It was the latter view which tended to prevail. But at first there was a period of confusion, if not of chaos, in the minds of the Reformers; not only were they not always convinced in their own minds; they were at variance with each other, especially on the practical question of divorce. Luther on the whole belonged to the more rigid party, including Calvin and Beza, which would grant divorce only for adultery and malicious desertion; some, including many of the early English Protestants, were in favour of allowing the husband to divorce for adultery but not the wife. Another party, including Zwingli, were influenced by Erasmus in a more liberal direction, and—moving towards the standpoint of Roman Imperial legislation—admitted various causes of divorce. Some, like Bucer, anticipating Milton, would even allow divorce when the husband was unable to love his wife. At the beginning some of the Reformers adopted the principle of self-divorce, as it prevailed among the Jews and was accepted by some early Church Councils. In this way Luther held that the cause for the divorce itself effected the divorce without any judicial decree, though a magisterial permission was needed for re-marriage. This question of re-marriage, and the treatment of the adulterer, were also matters of dispute. The re-marriage of the innocent party was generally accepted; in England it began in the middle of the sixteenth century, was pronounced valid by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and confirmed by Parliament. Many Reformers were opposed, however, to the re-marriage of the adulterous party. Beust, Beza, and Melanchthon would have him hanged and so settle the question of re-marriage; Luther and Calvin would like

to kill him, but since the civil rulers were slack in adopting that measure they allowed him to re-marry, if possible in some other part of the country.

The final outcome was that Protestantism framed a conception of marriage mainly on the legal and economic factor—a factor not ignored but strictly subordinated by the Canonists—and regarded it as essentially a contract. In so doing they were on the negative side effecting a real progress, for they broke the power of an antiquated and artificial system, but on the positive side they were merely returning to a conception which prevails in barbarous societies, and is most pronounced when marriage is most assimilable to purchase. The step thus taken by Protestantism involved a considerable change in the nature of marriage, but not necessarily any great change in its form. Marriage was no longer a sacrament, but it was still a public and not a private function and was still, however inconsistently, solemnized in Church. And as Protestantism had no rival code to set up, both in Germany and England it fell back on the general principles of Canon law, modifying them to suit its own special attitude and needs.[1] It was the later Puritanic movement, first in the Netherlands (1580), then in England (1653), and afterwards in New England, which introduced a serious and coherent conception of Protestant marriage, and began to establish it on a civil base.

The English Reformers under Edward VI and his enlightened advisers, including Archbishop Cranmer, took liberal views of marriage, and were prepared to carry through many admirable reforms. The early death of that king exerted a profound influence on the legal history of English marriage. The Catholic reaction under Queen Mary killed off the more radical reforms, while the subsequent accession of Queen Elizabeth, whose attitude towards marriage was grudging, illiberal, and old-fashioned, approximating to that of her father, Henry VIII (as witnessed, for instance, in her decided opposition to the marriage of the clergy), permanently affected English marriage law. It became less liberal than that of other Protestant countries, and closer to that of Catholic countries.

The reform of marriage attempted by the Puritans began in England in 1644, when an Act was passed asserting " marriage to be no sacrament, nor peculiar to the Church of God, but common to mankind and of public interest to every Commonwealth." The Act added, notwithstanding, that it was expedient marriage should be solemnized by " a lawful minister of the Word." The more radical Act of 1653 swept away this provision, and made marriage purely secular. The

[1] Probably as a result of the somewhat confused and incoherent attitude of the Reformers, the Canon law of marriage, in a modified form, really persisted in Protestant countries to a greater extent than in Catholic countries ; in France, especially, it has been much more profoundly modified.

banns were to be published (by registrars specially appointed) in the Church, or (if the parties desired) the market-place. The marriage was to be performed by a Justice of the Peace ; the age of consent to marriage for a man was made sixteen, for a woman fourteen. The Restoration abolished this sensible Act, and reintroduced Canon-law traditions.

It was out of Puritanism, moreover, as represented by Milton, that the first genuinely modern though as yet still imperfect conception of the marriage relationship was destined to emerge. The early Reformers in this matter acted mainly from an obscure instinct of natural revolt in an environment of plebeian materialism. The Puritans were moved by their feeling for simplicity and civil order as the conditions for religious freedom. Milton, in his *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, published in 1643, when he was thirty-five years of age, proclaimed the supremacy of the substance of marriage over the form of it, and the spiritual autonomy of the individual in the regulation of that form. He had grasped the meaning of that conception of personal responsibility which is the foundation of sexual relationships as they are beginning to appear to-day. If Milton had left behind him only his writings on marriage and divorce they would have sufficed to stamp him with the seal of genius. Christendom had to wait a century and a half before another man of genius, Wilhelm von Humboldt, spoke out with equal authority and clearness in favour of free marriage and free divorce. It is to the honour of Milton, and one of his chief claims on our gratitude, that he is the first great protagonist in Christendom of the doctrine that marriage is a private matter, and that, therefore, it should be freely dissoluble by mutual consent, or even at the desire of one of the parties.

Milton, in this matter as in others, stood outside the currents of his age. His conception of marriage made no more impression on contemporary life than his *Paradise Lost*. Even his own Puritan party who had passed the Act of 1653 had strangely failed to transfer divorce and nullity cases to the temporal courts, which would at least have been a step on the right road. The Puritan influence was transferred to America and constituted the leaven which still slowly works in producing the liberal though too minutely detailed divorce laws of many States. The American secular marriage procedure attempted to follow that set up by the English Commonwealth, and the dictum of the great Quaker, George Fox, " We marry none, but are witnesses of it " (which was really the sound kernel in the Canon law), is regarded as the spirit of the marriage law of the conservative but liberal State of Pennsylvania, where, as recently as 1885, a statute was passed expressly authorizing a man and woman to solemnize their own marriage. The actual practice in Pennsylvania appears, however, to differ little from that usual in the other States.

In England itself the reforms in marriage law effected by the Puritans were at the Restoration largely submerged. For two and a half centuries longer the English spiritual courts administered what was substantially the old Canon law. Divorce had, indeed, become more difficult than before the Reformation, and the married woman's lot was in consequence harder. From the sixteenth century to the second half of the nineteenth, English marriage law was peculiarly hard and rigid, much less liberal than that of any other Protestant country. Divorce was unknown to the ordinary English law, and a special act of Parliament, at enormous expense, was necessary to procure it in individual cases. There was even an attitude of self-righteousness in the maintenance of this system. It was regarded as moral. There was complete failure to realize that nothing is more immoral than the existence of unreal sexual unions, not only from the point of view of theoretical but also of practical morality, for no community could tolerate a majority of such unions. In 1857 an Act for reforming the system was at last passed with great difficulty. It was a somewhat incoherent and make-shift measure, and was avowedly put forward only as a step towards further reform; but it still substantially governs English procedure, and in the eyes of many has set a permanent standard of morality. The spirit of blind conservatism, which in this sphere had reasserted itself after the vital movement of Reform and Puritanism, still persists. In questions of marriage and divorce English legislation and English public feeling are behind alike both the Latin land of France and the Puritanically moulded land of the United States.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that the difficulty, the confusion, the inconsistency, and the flagrant indecency which surround divorce and the methods of securing it are due solely and entirely to the subtle persistence of traditions based, on the one hand, on the Canon law doctrines of the indissolubility of marriage and the sin of sexual intercourse outside marriage, and, on the other hand, on the primitive idea of marriage as a contract which economically subordinates the wife to the husband and renders her person, or at all events her guardianship, his property. It is only when we realize how deeply these traditions have become embedded in the religious, legal, social and sentimental life of Europe that we can understand how it is that barbaric notions of marriage and divorce can to-day subsist in a stage of civilization which has, in many respects, advanced beyond such notions.

The Canon law conception of the abstract religious sanctity of matrimony, when transferred to the moral sphere, makes a breach of the marriage relationship seem a public wrong; the conception of the contractive subordination of the wife makes such a breach on her part, and even, by transference of ideas, on his part, seem a private wrong.

These two ideas of wrong incoherently flourish side by side in the vulgar mind, even to-day.

The economic subordination of the wife as a species of property significantly comes into view when we find that a husband can claim, and often secure, large sums of money from the man who sexually approaches his property, by such trespass damaging it in its master's eyes.[1] To a psychologist it would be obvious that a husband who has lacked the skill so to gain and to hold his wife's love and respect that it is not perfectly easy and natural to her to reject the advances of any other man owes at least as much damages to her as she or her partner owes to him; while if the failure is really on her side, if she is so incapable of responding to love and trust and so easy a prey to an outsider, then surely the husband, far from wishing for any money compensation, should consider himself more than fully compensated by being delivered from the necessity of supporting such a woman. In the absence of any false traditions that would be obvious. It might not, indeed, be unreasonable that a husband should pay heavily in order to free himself from a wife whom, evidently, he has made a serious mistake in choosing. But to ordain that a man should actually be indemnified because he has shown himself incapable of winning a woman's love is an idea that could not occur in a civilized society that was not twisted by inherited prejudice.[2] Yet as matters are to-day there are civilized countries in which it is legally possible for a husband to enter a prayer for damages against his wife's paramour in combination with either a petition for judicial separation or for dissolution of wedlock. In this way adultery is not a crime but a private injury.

At the same time, however, the influence of Canon law comes inconsistently to the surface and asserts that a breach of matrimony is a public wrong, a sin transformed by the State into something almost or quite like a crime. This is clearly indicated by the fact that in some countries the adulterer is liable to imprisonment, a liability scarcely nowadays carried into practice. But exactly the

[1] Adultery in most savage and barbarous societies is regarded, in the words of Westermarck, as " an illegitimate appropriation of the exclusive claims which the husband has acquired by the purchase of his wife, as an offence against property; " the seducer is, therefore, punished as a thief, by fine, mutilation, even death.

[2] It is sometimes said in defence of the claim for damages for seducing a wife that women are often weak and unable to resist masculine advances, so that the law ought to press heavily on the man who takes advantage of that weakness. This argument seems a little antiquated. The law is beginning to accept the responsibility even of married women in other respects, and can scarcely refuse to accept it for the control of her own person. Moreover, if it is so natural for the woman to yield, it is scarcely legitimate to punish the man with whom she has performed that natural act. It must further be said that if a wife's adultery is only an irresponsible feminine weakness, a most undue brutality is inflicted on her by publicly demanding her pecuniary price from her lover. If, indeed, we accept this argument, we ought to reintroduce the medieval girdle of chastity.

same idea is beautifully illustrated by the doctrine of "collusion," which, in theory, is still strictly observed in many countries. According to the doctrine of "collusion" the conditions necessary to make the divorce possible must on no account be secured by mutual agreement. In practice it is impossible to prevent more or less collusion, but if proved in court it constitutes an absolute impediment to the granting of a divorce, however just and imperative the demand for divorce may be.

It is quite evident that from the social or the moral point of view, it is best that when a husband and wife can no longer live together, they should part amicably, and in harmonious agreement effect all the arrangements rendered necessary by their separation. The law ridiculously forbids them to do so, and declares that they must not part at all unless they are willing to part as enemies. In order to reach a still lower depth of absurdity and immorality the law goes on to say that if as a matter of fact they have succeeded in becoming enemies to each other to such an extent that each has wrongs to plead against the other party they cannot be divorced at all. That is to say that when a married couple have reached a degree of separation which makes it imperatively necessary, not merely in their own interests but in the moral interests of society, that they should be separated and their relations to other parties concerned regularized, then they must on no account be separated. The safest way in England to render what is legally termed marriage absolutely indissoluble is for both parties to commit adultery.

It is clear how these provisions of the law are totally opposed to the demands of reason and morality. Yet at the same time it is equally clear how no efforts of the lawyers, however skilful or humane those efforts may be, can bring the present law into harmony with the demands of modern civilization. It is not the lawyers who are at fault; they have done their best, and, in England, it is entirely owing to the skilful and cautious way in which the judges have so far as possible pressed the law into harmony with modern needs, that our antiquated divorce laws have survived at all. It is the system which is wrong. That system is the illegitimate outgrowth of the Canon law which grew up around conceptions long since dead. It involves the placing of the person who imperils the theoretical indissolubility of the matrimonial bond in the position of a criminal, now that he can no longer be publicly condemned as a sinner. To aid and abet that criminal is itself an offence, and the aider and abettor of the criminal must, therefore, be inconsequently punished by the curious method of refraining from punishing the criminal. We do not openly assert that the defendant in a divorce case is a criminal; that would be to render the absurdity of it too obvious, and, moreover, would be hardly consistent with the permission to claim damages which is based

on a different idea. We hover uncertainly between two conceptions of divorce, both of them bad, each inconsistent with the other, and neither of them capable of being pushed to its logical conclusions. The law, in order to pile absurdity on absurdity, claims that all this is done in the cause of "public morality." To crown all, ecclesiastics of the Church come forward as the enthusiastic champions of such "morality." It seems that the sweeping away of divorce laws would undermine the bases of morality. Yet there can be little doubt that the sooner such "morality" is undermined, and indeed utterly destroyed, the better it will be for true morality.

Even a former president of the Divorce Court, Lord Gorell, declared from the bench in 1906 that the English law produces deplorable results, and is "full of inconsistencies, anomalies and inequalities, amounting almost to absurdities." Thirty years later, in 1937 Mr. Justice Swift, at the Birmingham Assizes, said that over and over again, in one case after another, he had had the unhappy children of divided parents coming to prove either that one or other was guilty of adultery : "To my mind it is most terrible that the daughter should have to be called to prove her mother's adultery. Those who talk about the sanctity of marriage, those who talk about those 'whom God hath joined together,' those who lay the greatest emphasis upon 'Let no man put asunder,' do not see or, if they see it, do not realize the pain and suffering which comes into the witness-box. I disapprove of the whole system. To my mind the divorce laws of this country are wicked and cruel. These people ought not to be subjected to the dreadful indignities to which they are, and I wish some of those learned ecclesiastics who have so much concern with the well-being of society would come and sit here, where they would have to deal with matters. It would not be long before the divorce laws of this country were altered." These weighty words (quoted from *The Times*) by an experienced judge who knows of what he is speaking deserve a perpetuation beyond that of the daily press. The points in the law which aroused most protest, as being most behind the law of other nations, were the great expense of divorce, the failure to grant divorces for desertion and in cases of hopeless insanity, and the failure of separation orders to enable the separated parties to marry again. Separation orders are granted by magistrates for cruelty, adultery, and desertion. This "separation" is really the direct descendant of the Canon law divorce *a mensa et thoro*, and the inability to marry which it involves as merely a survival of the Canon law tradition. It is of course a direct encouragement to the violation of that "morality" which law is commonly supposed to favour.

There was certainly an influential body of enlightened opinion in England advocating reform of the existing law as unjust, illogical,

and immoral. The Divorce Law Reform Union was many years since established to voice and further their opinion, and later the Marriage Law Reform League. In 1909 a Royal Commission on Divorce and Matrimonial Causes was at last appointed; in 1912 it issued its Majority Report (there was a Minority Negative Report signed by only three commissioners, one an archbishop) recommending that the statutory grounds for a petition of divorce should be, in addition to adultery, under prescribed circumstances wilful desertion, cruelty, insanity, habitual drunkenness, and imprisonment. But the Report produced little or no results. In 1920, it is true, an eminent and broad-minded lawyer, the late Lord Buckmaster, introduced into the House of Lords a Bill embodying most of these recommendations, but it met with no acceptance in the House of Commons. A few minor evils have been redressed by Parliament, but that is all. The only important reform in divorce law since 1857 has been the right accorded to the wife to divorce her husband for the same reason, adultery, which enables him to divorce her. But that left the law in the highly unsatisfactory condition of only being able to grant the relief of divorce to unhappily married couples when they have agreed to commit either adultery or perjury. In 1936 an extremely temperate Marriage Bill, initiated by Mr. A. P. Herbert, was introduced into the House of Commons; it was framed in so moderate a spirit in order (as Mr. Herbert put it) "to secure for the first time, the agreement of the majority of churchmen and to relieve the conscience of the clergy." This Bill included a new and highly valuable provision for preliminary conciliation, before a disturbed marriage reaches the point of legal appeal, to be effected by the increasing social services in connection with the police courts, this provision being recommended by experience of its beneficial results, while other provisions of the Bill fortunately retained included a long-demanded extension of the grounds for divorce. Even this Bill, however, was whittled down in its passage through Parliament, but became law in 1937 as the Matrimonial Causes Act. It seems to remain true, as in 1937 an American observer remarks in relation to the attitude of the British Parliament towards Edward VIII: "Their emphatic unwillingness to accept Mrs. Simpson revealed the true status of divorce as a legal measure in England only too clearly. The British people have not accepted divorce as a necessary and inevitable institution to correct tragic marital situations brought about by the swiftly changing times and complexities of our modern world. It looms as a three-headed monster to them."

It is natural that every humane person should grow impatient of the spectacle of so many blighted lives, of so much misery inflicted on innocent persons—and on persons who even when technically guilty are often the victims of unnatural circumstances—by the persistence

of a medieval system of ecclesiastical tyranny and inquisitorial insolence into an age when sexual relationships are becoming regarded as the sacred secret of the persons intimately concerned, and when more and more we rely on the responsibility of the individual in making and maintaining such relationships.

When, however, we refrain from concentrating our attention on particular countries and embrace the general movement of civilization in the matter of divorce during recent times, there cannot be the slightest doubt as to the direction of that movement. To-day every civilized country is moving in the same direction. France broke with the old ecclesiastical tradition of the indissolubility of matrimony in 1885 by a divorce law in some respects very reasonable. The wife may obtain a divorce on an equality with the husband, the co-respondent occupies a subordinate position in adultery charges, and facility is offered for divorce on the ground of simple *injures graves* (excluding as far as possible mere incompatibility of temper), while the judge has the power, which he often successfully exerts, to effect a reconciliation in private or to grant a decree without public trial. The influence of France has doubtless been influential in moulding the divorce laws of other Latin countries.

Russia, even when the marriage laws were still arranged by the Holy Synod aided by jurists, stood almost alone among the great countries in the reasonable simplicity of its divorce provisions. Before 1907 divorce was difficult to obtain in Russia, but in that year it became possible for a married couple to separate by mutual consent and after living apart for a year to become thereby entitled to a divorce enabling them to remarry. This provision is in accordance with the humane conception of the sexual relationship which has always tended to prevail in Russia, whither, it must be remembered, the stern and unnatural ideals of compulsory clerical celibacy cherished by the Western Church never penetrated.[1] In this respect, at all events, the Soviet Revolution of 1917 may be said to have carried on the movement initiated under the Tsarist *régime*. The first disturbing outcome of the Revolution was, indeed, as might be expected, a chaos of more or less sexual promiscuity, with its natural results, especially in the cities, of an appalling number of homeless children. This state of things much distressed Lenin himself, whose attitude to sex was idealistic, and he considered that physical attraction should always be combined with higher human elements.

As Soviet conditions became regularized and brought under law, this state of things was gradually bettered. The fundamental Russian tendency to a considerable degree of freedom in sex was preserved, but the prevailing Bolshevik attitude towards that freedom is some-

[1] After the fourth Lateran Council, held by Alexander III in 1215, there are few further traces in the Western Church of marriages of priests in holy orders.

times, in some respects, rather austere. Sex, it is held, though important, is only a part of life, and devotion to the wider Soviet causes should prevent too great a stress on sex. Marriage is easy, so easy that practically every child is born under legitimate conditions, and divorce was at first even easier, because it could be effected at the wish of one party without the need to consult the other. But since 1936 the regulations have been tightened up; both parties must appear before the registrar if they desire divorce, and a large fee has to be paid, the fee being progressively increased for every subsequent divorce, so that it is no longer easy to dissolve marriage. Moreover, on divorce, a man has to pay a considerable alimony for every child, and for three children this amounts to more than half his earnings. The children remain with the mother, unless she is obviously incompetent. It was at one time thought that Bolshevism might lead to the communal care of children apart from their parents. This proved to be a delusion. The shortage of housing has been a difficulty so far in keeping the children of a family together. But Russians are devoted to their families. As Mrs. Alice Field remarks, "the dream of isolating children from their parents, and bringing them up according to a scientifically correct *régime*. is as far from being realized in the U.S.S.R. as it is in any other country." And another experienced observer, Dr. Ralph Reynolds, remarks: "So far as I can tell, there is no evidence of any break-up of the family as an established institution in Russia," though he finds that conditions have changed and in many respects been improved.

Outside Europe an instructive example of the tendency of divorce is furnished by the United States of America. The divorce laws of the States are mainly on a Puritanic basis, and they retain not only the Puritanic love of individual freedom but the Puritanic precisianism. In some States the statute-makers have been constantly engaged in adopting, changing, abrogating, and re-enacting the provisions of their divorce laws, and much confusion and awkwardness arise by such perpetual legislative fiddling over small details.

This restless precisianism has somewhat disguised the generally broad and liberal tendency of marriage law in America, and has encouraged foreign criticism of American social institutions. As a matter of fact the prevalence of divorce in America is exaggerated. The proportion of divorced persons in the population appears to be small, and contrary to a frequent assertion, it is by no means the rule for divorced persons to remarry immediately. Taking into account the special conditions of life in the United States the prevalence of divorce by no means reveals a low grade morality. An impartial and competent critic of the American people, Münsterberg, remarked long ago that the real ground which mainly leads to divorce in the United States—not the mere legal pretexts made compulsory by the

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precisianism of the law—is the highly ethical objection to continuing externally in a marriage which has ceased to be spiritually congenial. "It is the women especially," he says, "and generally the very best women, who prefer to take the step, with all the hardships which it involves, to prolonging a marriage which is spiritually hypocritical and immoral."

The people of the United States still cherish ideals of individualism; they are also the people among whom, above all others, there is the greatest amount of what Reibmayr calls "blood-chaos." Under such circumstances the difficulties of conjugal life are necessarily at a maximum, and marriage union is liable to subtle impediments which must for ever elude the statute-book. It is, indeed, surprising that the American people, usually intolerant of State interference, should in this matter so long have tolerated such interference in so private a matter. For in spite of all the American efforts to reform marriage-laws, conditions in the United States remain very unsatisfactory. The American writer whose condemnation of British evils in this matter I have already quoted, is far from tender in describing the like evils in his own country. "While we may sniff," he declares, "at the conservative Britishers and their engaging hypocrisies, the sad fact is that the divorce issue demands an answer in our own country. We have forty-nine different sets of laws in our forty-eight states and one district, and most of them are a hundred years behind the times.[1] We spend almost two billion dollars a year for the machinery to handle divorce, and permit a monstrous injustice to our poor and middle classes to go on unheeded. There is no divorce for the poor. Relief from intolerable marriage problems is the prerogative of the rich who are best able to solve their problems and who most often abuse the privilege of divorce. We have established no national bureau to investigate the causes of marriage failures and to offer suggestions for their solution. Such studies have been made by private organizations—who very often have an axe to grind. We have launched no national programme to clean up the alimony racket or to provide relief for the victims now residing in jails. Our hypocrisy rivals the conservative Britisher's!"

This writer, however, too moderately estimates the efforts of private organizations. These have been very numerous, very energetically carried on, and of a high order of merit. In no other country has there been so much eager and often skilful effort to investigate the various problems that centre in marriage. If the United

[1] But we must bear in mind the liberalizing process in American divorce laws. In some States, among which Nevada has taken the lead, only a short period of residence is required before the divorce is granted, and no specific charges necessary in divorce petitions. See *Men, Women, and Conflict* (1931), by Judge G. Bartlett of the Reno Court of Nevada.

States is one of the countries where divorce is frequent, it is most frequent, as was long ago pointed out, in the States where the standard of education and morality is highest. It was the New England States, with strong Puritanic traditions of moral freedom, which took the lead in granting facility to divorce. The movement is not, as some have foolishly supposed, a movement making for immorality. Immorality is the inevitable accompaniment of indissoluble marriage; the emphasis on the sanctity of a merely formal union discourages the growth of moral responsibility as regards the hypothetically unholy unions which grow up beneath its shadow. To insist, on the other hand, by establishing facility of divorce, that sexual unions shall be real, is to work in the cause of morality. The lands in which divorce by mutual consent prevails are probably the most, and not the least, moral of lands.

Surprise has been expressed that although divorce by mutual consent commended itself as an obviously just and reasonable measure 2,000 years ago to the legally-minded Romans that solution is even yet being so slowly attained by modern states. Wherever society is established on a solidly organized basis and the claims of reason and humanity receive due consideration—even when the general level of civilization is not in every respect high—there we find a tendency to divorce by mutual consent.

It is sometimes said by those who in England would at all costs retain the present difficulties in the way of securing divorce, that public opinion is not ready for it and that there is no general demand for any greater facilities. That is true enough if it means that there is no general wish of the British population to secure divorce personally. But it is far from true as regards those who take a wider than merely personal view and direct their attention to what is for the general good. It is enough here to refer to one significant fact revealing the opinion of women, the more significant since it refers to a period nearly thirty years back before women had received the right to vote and when divorce had not yet been made available to women on the same ground as to men. In 1910, when the Divorce Commission was sitting, the Women's Co-operative Guild submitted a series of questions to its members for the purpose of presenting evidence to the Commission. In the course of this inquiry some detailed questions were asked of women who held, or had held, official positions in the League and who thus represented the finest class of working women. Nearly all were in favour of granting divorce on equal terms to both sexes, and 82 out of 94 were in favour of divorce by simple mutual consent. At that time this decision by so large a majority of picked women was regarded, even in advanced quarters, as "startling indeed." But it should alone have sufficed, even at that date, to crush the

objections of those who still protest that there is "no general demand" for marriage reform.

We may take it for granted that there will remain a small minority of antiquated ecclesiastics and their followers who will cling with fierce tenacity to this conception of indissoluble marriage, even though this attitude is actually opposed alike to the law of the Church and of the Realm. But it is not proposed to apply compulsion to them to effect dissolution of their own marriages, however recklessly and foolishly contracted. They are called upon to recognize that they must allow a similar freedom to those who do not accept their peculiar and no longer generally acceptable ideas of marriage.

The fact that we so rarely find divorce by mutual consent in Christendom until the beginning of the nineteenth century, that then it required a man of stupendous and revolutionary energy like Napoleon to reintroduce it, and that even he was unable to do so effectually, is clearly due to the immense victory which the ascetic spirit of Christianity, as firmly embodied in the Canon law, had gained over the souls and bodies of men. So subjugated were European traditions and institutions by this spirit that even the volcanic emotional uprising of the Reformation, as we have seen, could not shake it off. When Protestant States resumed the control of secular affairs which had been absorbed by the Church, and rescued from ecclesiastical hands those things which belonged to the sphere of the individual conscience, it might have seemed that marriage and divorce would have been among the first concerns to be thus transferred. Yet, as we know, England was about as much enslaved to the spirit and even the letter of Canon law in the nineteenth as in the fourteenth century, and even to-day English law, though no longer supported by the feeling of the masses, clings to the same traditions.

There seems to be little doubt, however, that the modern movement for divorce must inevitably tend to reach the goal of separation by the will of both parties, or, under proper conditions and restrictions, by the will of one party. It now requires the will of two persons to form a marriage; law insists on that condition.[1] It is logical as well as just that law should take the next step involved by the historical evolution of marriage, and equally insist that it requires the will of two persons to maintain a marriage. This solution is, without doubt, the only way of deliverance from the crudities, the indecencies, the inextricable complexities which are introduced into law by the vain attempt to foresee in detail all the possibilities of conjugal disharmony which may arise under the conditions of modern

[1] In England this step was taken in the reign of Henry VII, when the forcible marriage of women against their will was forbidden by statute. Even in the middle of the seventeenth century, however, the question of forcible marriage had again to be dealt with.

civilization. It is, moreover, we may rest assured, the only solution which the growing modern sense of personal responsibility in sexual matters traced in the previous chapter—the responsibility of women as well as of men—will be content to accept.

Reform upon a reasonable basis has been made difficult by the unfortunate retention of the idea of delinquency. But in the marriage relationship, as in all other relationships, it is only in a small number of cases that one party stands towards the other as a criminal, even a defendant. This is often obvious in the early stages of conjugal alienation. But it remains true in the end. The wife commits adultery and the husband as a matter of course assumes the position of plaintiff. But we do not inquire how it is that he has not so won her love that her adultery is out of the question; such inquiry might lead to the conclusion that the real defendant is the husband. And similarly when the husband is accused of brutal cruelty the law takes no heed to inquire whether in the infliction of less brutal but not less poignant wounds, the wife also should not be made defendant. There are a few cases, but only a few, in which the relationship of plaintiff and defendant is not a totally false and artificial relationship, an immoral legal fiction. In most cases, if the truth were fully known, husband and wife should come side by side to the divorce court and declare: "We are both in the wrong: we have not been able to fulfil our engagements to each other; we have erred in choosing each other." The long reports of the case in open court, the mutual recriminations, the detectives, the servant girls and other witnesses, the infamous inquisition into intimate secrets—all these things, which no necessity could ever justify, are altogether unnecessary.

It is said by some that if there were no impediments to divorce a man might be married in succession to half a dozen women. But even when marriage is absolutely indissoluble a man can, and frequently does, carry on sexual relationships not merely successively, but, if he chooses, even simultaneously, with half a dozen women. There is, however, this important difference that, in the one case, the man is encouraged by the law to believe that he need only treat at most one of the six women with anything approaching to justice and humanity; in the other case the law insists that he shall fairly and openly fulfil his obligations towards all the six women. It is an important difference, and there ought to be no question as to which state of things is moral and which immoral. It is no concern of the State to inquire into the number of persons with whom a man or a woman chooses to have sexual relationships; it is a private matter which may indeed affect their own finer spiritual development but which it is impertinent for the State to pry into. It is, however, the concern of the State, in its own collective interest and that of its members, to see that no injustice is done.

But what about the children? That is an important question. The question of the arrangements made for the children in cases of divorce is always one to which the State must give its regulative attention, for it is only when there are children that the State has any real concern in the matter.

At one time it was even supposed by some that the existence of children was a serious argument against facility of divorce. A more reasonable view is now generally taken. It is, in the first place, recognized that a large proportion of couples seeking divorce have no children. In England the proportion has been about 40 per cent.; in some other countries it is doubtless larger still. But even when there are children no one who realizes what the conditions are in families where the parents ought to be but are not divorced can have any doubt that usually those conditions are bad for the children. The tension between the parents absorbs energy which should be devoted to the children. The spectacle of the grievances or quarrels of their parents is demoralizing for the children, and usually fatal to any respect towards them. At the best it is injuriously distressing to the children. One effective parent, there cannot be the slightest doubt, is far better for a child than two ineffective parents. There is a further point, often overlooked, for consideration here. Two people when living together at variance—one of them perhaps, it is not rarely the case, nervously abnormal or diseased—are not fitted to become parents, nor in the best condition for procreation. It is, therefore, not merely an act of injustice to the individual, but a measure called for in the interests of the State, that new citizens should not be brought into the community through such defective channels.[1] From this point of view all the interests of the State are on the side of facility of divorce.

There is a final argument which is often brought forward against facility of divorce. Marriage, it is said, is for the protection of women; facilitate divorce and women are robbed of that protection. It is obvious that this argument has little application as against divorce by mutual consent. Certainly it is desirable that divorce should be arranged under conditions which in each individual case have received the approval of the law as just. But it must always be remembered that the essential fact of marriage is not naturally, and should never artificially be made, an economic question. It is possible—that is a question which society will have to consider—that a woman should be paid for being a mother on the ground that she is rearing new citizens for the State. But neither the State nor her husband nor

[1] Woods Hutchinson argued that when there is epilepsy, insanity, moral perversion, habitual drunkenness, or criminal conduct of any kind, divorce, for the sake of the next generation, should be not permissive but compulsory. Mere divorce, however, would not suffice to attain the ends desired. Sterilization would now be advocated as better effecting the same end.

anyone else ought to pay her for exercising conjugal rights. The fact that such an argument can be brought forward shows how far we are from the sound biological attitude towards sexual relationships. Equally unsound is the notion that the virgin bride brings her husband at marriage an important capital which is consumed in the first act of intercourse and can never be recovered. That is a notion which has survived into civilization, but it belongs to barbarism and not to civilization. So far as it has any validity it lies within a sphere of erotic perversity which cannot be taken into consideration in an estimation of moral values. For most men, however, in any case, whether they realize it or not, the woman who has been initiated into the mysteries of love has a higher erotic value than the virgin; and there need be no anxiety on this ground concerning the bride who has lost her virginity. It is probably a significant fact that this anxiety for the protection of women by the limitation of divorce is chiefly brought forward by men and not by women themselves. A woman at marriage is deprived by society and the law of her own name. She has been deprived until recently of the right to her own earnings. She is deprived of the most intimate rights in her own person. She is deprived under some circumstances of her own child, against whom she may have committed no offence whatever. It is perhaps scarcely surprising that she is not greatly appreciative of the protection afforded her by the withholding of the right to divorce her husband. "Ah, no, no protection!" a brilliant Frenchwoman has written. "We have been protected long enough. The only protection to grant women is to cease protecting them." As a matter of fact, the divorce movement appears to develop, on the whole, with the development of woman's moral responsibility.

We cannot fail to realize as we grasp the nature and direction of the modern movement of divorce that the final tendency of that movement is to efface itself. Necessary as the Divorce Court has been as the inevitable corollary of an impossible ecclesiastical conception of marriage, no institution is now more alien to the instinctive feelings generated by a fine civilization. Its disappearance and its substitution by private arrangements, effected on their contractive sides, especially if there are children to provide for, under legal and if necessary judicial supervision, is, and always has been, the natural result of the attainment of a reasonably high stage of civilization. The Divorce Court has merely been a phase in the history of modern marriage, and a phase that has really been repugnant to all concerned in it. There is no need to view its ultimate disappearance with anything but satisfaction. It was merely the outcome of an artificial conception of marriage. It is time to return to the consideration of that conception.

We have seen that when the Catholic development of the archaic

conception of marriage as a sacrament, slowly elaborated and fossilized by the ingenuity of the Canonists, was at last nominally dethroned, though not destroyed, by the movement associated with the Reformation, it was replaced by the conception of marriage as a contract. This conception of marriage as a contract still enjoys a considerable amount of credit amongst us.

There must always be contractive elements, implicit or explicit, in a marriage; that was well recognized even by the Canonists. But when we treat marriage as all contract, and nothing but contract, we have to realize that we have set up a very peculiar form of contract, not voidable, like other contracts, by the agreement of the parties to it, but dissolved as a sort of punishment of delinquency rather than as the voluntary annulment of a bond. When the Protestant Reformers seized on the idea of marriage as a contract they were not influenced by any reasoned analysis of the special characteristics of a contract; they were merely anxious to secure a plausible ground, already admitted even by the Canonists to cover certain aspects of the matrimonial union, on which they could declare that marriage is a secular and not an ecclesiastical matter, a civil bond and not a sacramental process.

Like so much else in the Protestant revolt, the strength of this attitude lay in the fact that it was a protest, and based on its negative side on reasonable and natural grounds. But while Protestantism was right in its attempt—for it was only an attempt—to deny the authority of Canon law, that attempt was altogether unsatisfactory on the positive side. As a matter of fact marriage is not a true contract and no attempt has even been made to convert it into a true contract.

If marriage were really placed on the basis of a contract, not only would that contract be voidable at the will of the two parties concerned, without any question of delinquency coming into the question, but those parties would at the outset themselves determine the conditions regulating the contract. But nothing could be more unlike our actual marriage. The two parties are bidden to accept each other as husband and wife; they are not invited to make a contract; they are not even told that, little as they may know it they have in fact made a very complicated and elaborate contract that was framed on lines laid down, for a large part, thousands of years before they were born. Unless they have studied law they are totally ignorant, also, that this contract contains clauses which under some circumstances may be fatal to either of them. All that happens is that a young couple, perhaps little more than children, momentarily dazed by emotion, are hurried before the clergyman or the civil registrar of marriages, to bind themselves together for life, knowing nothing of the world and scarcely more of each other,

knowing nothing also of the marriage laws, not even perhaps so much as that there are any marriage laws, never realizing that—as has been truly said—from the place they are entering beneath a garland of flowers there is, on this side of death, no exit except through the trapdoor of a sewer.

Marriage is, therefore, not only not a contract in the true sense, but in the only sense in which it is a contract it is a contract of an exceedingly bad kind. When the Canonists superseded the old conception of marriage as a contract of purchase by their sacramental marriage, they were in many respects effecting a real progress, and the return to the idea of a contract, as soon as its temporary value as a protest has ceased, proves out of harmony with an advanced stage of civilization. It was revived in days before the revolt against slavery had been inaugurated. Personal contracts are out of harmony with our modern civilization and our ideas of individual liberty. A man can no longer contract himself as a slave nor sell his wife. Yet marriage, regarded as a contract, is of precisely the same class as those transactions. In any humane civilization this fact is recognized, and young couples are not even allowed to contract themselves out in marriage unconditionally. We see this, for instance, in the wise legislation of the Romans. Even under the Christian Emperors that sound principle was maintained and the lawyer Paulus wrote: "Marriage was so free, according to ancient opinion, that even agreements between the parties not to separate from one another could have no validity." In so far as the essence and not any accidental circumstance of the marital relationships is made a contract, it is a contract of a nature which the two parties concerned are not competent to make. Biologically and psychologically it cannot be valid, and with the growth of a humane civilization it is explicitly declared to be legally invalid.

For, there can be no doubt about it, the intimate and essential fact of marriage—the relationship of sexual intercourse—is not and cannot be a contract. It is not contract but conduct, not contract but a fact; it cannot be effected by any mere act of will on the part of the parties concerned; it cannot be maintained by any mere act of will. To will such a contract is merely to perform a worse than indecorous farce. Certainly many of the circumstances of marriage are properly the subject of contract, to be voluntarily and deliberately made by the parties to the contract. But the essential fact of marriage—a love strong enough to render the most intimate of relationships possible and desirable through an indefinite number of years—cannot be made a matter for contract. Alike from the physical point of view, and the psychical point of view, no binding contract—and a contract is worthless if it is not binding—can possibly be made. And the making of such pseudo-contracts concerning the

future of a marriage, before it has even been ascertained that the marriage can ever become a fact at all, is not only impossible but absurd.

It is, of course, true that this impossibility, this absurdity, is never visible to the contracting parties. They have applied to the question all the restricted tests that are conventionally permitted to them, and the satisfactory results of these tests, together with the consciousness of possessing an immense and apparently inexhaustible fund of loving emotion, seem to them adequate to the fulfilment of the contract throughout life, if not indeed eternity.

As a child of seven I chanced to be in a semi-tropical island of the Pacific supplied with fruit, especially grapes, from the mainland, and a dusky market-woman always presented a large bunch of grapes to the little English stranger. But a day came when the proffered bunch was firmly refused; the superabundance of grapes had produced a reaction of disgust. A space of nearly forty years was needed to overcome the repugnance to grapes thus acquired. Yet there can be no doubt that if at the age of six that little boy had been asked to sign a contract binding him to accept grapes every day, to keep them always near him, to eat them and to enjoy them every day, he would have signed that contract as joyously as any radiant bridegroom or demure bride signs the register in the vestry. But is a complex man or woman, with unknown capacities for changing or deteriorating, and with incalculable aptitudes for inflicting torture and arousing loathing, is such a creature more easy to be bound to than an exquisite fruit? All the countries of the world in which the subtle influence of the Canon law of Christendom still makes itself felt, have not yet grasped a general truth which is well within the practical experience of a child of seven.

It thus tends to come about that with the growth of civilization the conception of marriage as a contract falls more and more into discredit. It is realized, on the one hand, that personal contracts are out of harmony with our general and social attitude, for if we reject the idea of a human being contracting himself as a slave, how much more we should reject the idea of entering by contract into the still more intimate relationship of a husband or a wife; on the other hand it is felt that the idea of pre-ordained contracts on a matter over which the individual himself has no control is quite unreal and, when any strict rules of equity prevail, necessarily invalid.

The transference of marriage from the Church to the State which, in the lands where it first occurred, we owe to Protestantism and, in the English-speaking lands, especially to Puritanism, while a necessary stage, had the unfortunate result of secularizing the sexual relationships. That is to say, it ignored the transcendent element in love which is really the essential part of such relationships, and it con-

centrated attention on those formal and accidental parts of marriage which can alone be dealt with in a rigid and precise manner, and can alone properly form the subject of contracts. The Canon law, fantastic and impossible as it became in many of its developments, at least insisted on the natural and actual fact of marriage as, above all, a bodily union, while, at the same time, it regarded that union as no mere secular business contract but a sacred and exalted function, a divine fact, and the symbol of the most divine fact in the world. We are returning to-day to the Canonist's conception of marriage on a higher and freer plane, bringing back the exalted conception of the Canon law, yet retaining the individualism which the Puritan wrongly thought he could secure on the basis of mere secularization, while, further, we recognize that the whole process belongs to the private sphere of moral responsibility. The sacramental idea of marriage thus again emerges but on a higher plane; as Hobhouse put it, "from being a sacrament in the magical, it has become one in the ethical, sense." We are thus tending towards, though we have not yet legally achieved, marriage made and maintained by consent, in Hobhouse's words, "a union between two free and responsible persons in which the equal rights of both are maintained," and it follows that as more recently (1937) an eminent lawyer, Sir Ellis Hume-Williams, adds, "divorce should be allowed in all cases where the union brings misery to the parties and danger to the community."

It is supposed by some that to look upon sexual union as a sacrament is necessarily to accept the ancient Catholic view that matrimony is indissoluble. That is, however, a mistake. Even the Canonists themselves were never able to put forward any coherent and consistent ground for the indissolubility of matrimony which could commend itself rationally, while Luther and Milton and Wilhelm von Humboldt, who maintained the religious and sacred nature of sexual union—though they were cautious about using the term sacrament on account of its ecclesiastical implications—so far from believing that its sanctity involved indissolubility, argued in the reverse sense. This point of view may be defended even from a strictly Protestant standpoint. "I take it," G. C. Maberly says, "that the Prayer Book definition of a sacrament, 'the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace,' is generally accepted. In marriage the legal and physical unions are the outward and visible signs, while the inward and spiritual grace is the God-given love that makes the union of heart and soul: and it is precisely because I take this view of marriage that I consider the legal and physical union should be dissolved whenever the spiritual union of unselfish, divine love and affection has ceased."

If from the point we have now reached we look back at the question of divorce we see that, as the modern aspects of the marriage relationships becomes more clearly realized by the community, that question

will be immensely simplified. Since marriage is not a mere contract but a fact of conduct, and even a sacred fact, the free participation of both parties is needed to maintain it. In the question as to when a marriage has ceased to be a marriage the two parties concerned can alone be the supreme judges; the State, if the State is called in, can but register the sentence they pronounce, merely seeing to it that no injustice is involved in the carrying out of that sentence.

In discussing in the previous chapter the direction in which sexual morality tends to develop with the development of civilization we came to the conclusion that in its main lines it involved, above all, personal responsibility. A relationship fixed among savage peoples by social custom which none dare break, and in a higher stage of culture by formal laws which must be observed in the letter even if broken in the spirit, becomes gradually transferred to the sphere of individual moral responsibility. Such a transference is necessarily meaningless, and indeed impossible, unless the increasing stringency of the moral bond is accompanied by the decreasing stringency of the formal bond. It is only by the process of loosening the artificial restraints that the natural restraints can exert their full control. That process takes place in two ways, in part on the basis of the indifference to formal marriage which has marked the masses of the population everywhere and doubtless stretches back to the tenth century before the domination of ecclesiastical matrimony began, and partly by the progressive modification of marriage laws made necessary by the needs of the propertied classes anxious to secure the State recognition of their unions. The whole process is necessarily a gradual and indeed imperceptible process. It is impossible to fix definitely the dates of the stages by which the Church effected the immense revolution by which it grasped, and eventually transferred to the State, the complete control of marriage, for that revolution was effected without the intervention of any law. It will be equally difficult to perceive the transference of the control of marriage from the State to the individuals concerned, and the more difficult because, as we shall see, although the essential and intimately personal fact of marriage is not a proper matter for State control, there are certain aspects of marriage which touch the interests of the community so closely that the State is bound to insist on their registration and to take an interest in their settlement.

The result of dissolving the formal stringency of the marriage relationship, it is sometimes said, would be a tendency to an immoral laxity. Those who make this statement overlook the fact that laxity tends to reach a maximum as a result of stringency, and that where the merely external authority of a rigid marriage law prevails, there the extreme excesses of license most flourish. It is also undoubtedly true, and for the same reason, that any sudden removal of restraints

necessarily involves a reaction to the opposite extreme of license; a slave is not changed at a stroke into an antonomous freeman. Yet we have to remember that the marriage order existed for millenniums before any attempt was made to mould it into arbitrary shapes by human legislation. Such legislation, we have seen, was indeed the effort of the human spirit to affirm more emphatically the demands of its own instincts. But its final result is to choke and impede rather than to further the instincts which inspired it. Its gradual disappearance allows the natural order free and proper scope.

It is certainly inevitable that during a period of transition the natural order is to some extent disturbed by the persistence, even though in a weakened form, of external bonds which are beginning to be consciously realized as inimical to the authoritative control of individual moral responsibility. We can clearly trace this at the present time. A sensitive anxiety to escape from external constraint induces an under-valuation of the significance of personal constraint in the relationship of marriage. Everyone is probably familiar with cases in which a couple will live together through long years without entering the legal bond of marriage, notwithstanding difficulties in their mutual relationship which would have long since caused a separation or a divorce had they been legally married. When the inherent difficulties of the marital relationship are complicated by the difficulties due to external constraint, the development of individual moral responsibility cuts two ways, and leads to results that are not entirely satisfactory. It is always a hard lesson for the young and idealistic that in order to command Nature we must obey her; it can only be learnt through contact with life and by the attainment of full human growth.

We have seen that the modern tendency as regards marriage is towards its recognition as a voluntary union entered into by two free, equal, and morally responsible persons, and that on its highest side that union is rather of the nature of an ethical sacrament than of a contract, so that alike as a physical or a spiritual bond it is outside the sphere of the State's action. It has been necessary to labour that point before we approach what may seem to many not only a different but even a totally opposed aspect of marriage. If the marriage union itself cannot be a matter for contract, it naturally leads to a fact which must necessarily be a matter for implicit or explicit contract, a matter, moreover, in which the community at large has a real and proper interest: that is the fact of procreation.

The ancient Egyptians—among whom matrimonial institutions were so elastic and the position of woman so high—recognized a provisional and slight marriage bond for the purpose of testing fecundity.[1] The introduction of a new individual into the com-

[1] This bond also accorded rights to any children that might be born during its existence.

munity is not, like sexual union, a mere personal fact, but a social fact, a fact in which the State cannot fail to be concerned. Two people who form an erotic relationship are bound, when they reach the conviction that their relationship is a real marriage, having its natural end in procreation, to subscribe to a contract which, though it may leave themselves personally free, must yet bind them both to their duties towards their children.

The necessity for such an undertaking is double, even apart from the fact that it is in the highest interests of the parents themselves. It is required in the interests of the child. It is required in the interests of the State. A child can be bred, and well-bred, by one effective parent. But to equip a child adequately for its entrance into life both parents are usually needed. The State on its side—that is to say, the community of which parents and child alike form part—is bound to know who these persons are who have become sponsors for a new individual now introduced into its midst. The most Individualistic State, the most Socialistic State, are alike bound, if faithful to the interests, both biological and economic, of their constituent members generally, to insist on the full legal and recognized parentage of the father and mother of every child. That is clearly demanded in the interests of the child; it is clearly demanded also in the interests of the State. "Marriage," as Malinowski puts it, "cannot be defined as the licensing of sexual intercourse, but rather as the licensing of parenthood."

The barrier which in Christendom has opposed itself to the natural recognition of this fact, so injuring alike the child and the State, has clearly been the rigidity of the marriage system. The Canonists attributed a truly immense importance to the *copula carnalis*, as they technically termed it. They centred marriage strictly in the vagina; they were not greatly concerned about either the presence or the absence of the child. The vagina, as we know, has not always proved a very firm centre for the support of marriage, and that centre is now being transferred to the child. If we turn from the Canonists to the writings of a modern like Ellen Key, we seem to have entered a new world, even a newly illuminated world. For "in the new sexual morality, as in Corregio's *Notte*, the light emanates from the child."

No doubt this change is largely a matter of sentiment, of, as we sometimes say, mere sentiment, although there is nothing so powerful in human affairs as sentiment, and the revolution effected by Jesus, the later revolutions effected by Rousseau and Marx, were mainly revolutions in sentiment. But the change is also a matter of the growing recognition of interests and rights, and as such it manifests itself in law. We can scarcely doubt that we are approaching a time when it will be generally understood that the entrance into the world

of every child, without exception, should be preceded by the formation of a marriage contract which, while in no way binding the father and mother to any duties, or any privileges, towards each other, binds them both towards their child and at the same time ensures their responsibility towards the State. It is impossible for the State to obtain more than this, but it should be impossible for it to demand less. A contract of such a kind "marries" the father and mother so far as the parentage of the individual child is concerned, and in no other respect; it is a contract which leaves entirely unaffected their past, present, or future relations towards other persons, otherwise it would be impossible to enforce it. In all parts of the world this elementary demand of social morality is slowly beginning to be recognized, and as it affects hundreds of thousands of infants who are yearly branded as "illegitimate" through no act of their own, no one can say that the recognition has come too soon. As yet, indeed, unless in Soviet Russia, it seems nowhere to be complete.

There has been much discussion in the past concerning the particular form which marriage ought to take. Many theorists have exercised their ingenuity in inventing and preaching new and unusual marriage-arrangements as panaceas for social ills; while others have exerted even greater energy in denouncing all such proposals as subversive of the foundations of human society. We may regard all such discussions, on the one side or the other, as idle.

In the first place marriage customs are far too fundamental, far too intimately blended with the primary substance of human and indeed animal society, to be in the slightest degree shaken by the theories or the practices of mere individuals, or even groups of individuals. Monogamy—the more or less prolonged cohabitation of two individuals of opposite sex—has been the prevailing type of sexual relationship among the higher vertebrates and through the greater part of human history. This is admitted even by those who believe that man has passed through a stage of sexual promiscuity, or at all events of group marriage. There have been tendencies to variation in one direction or another, but at the lowest stages and the highest stages, so far as can be seen, monogamy represents the prevailing rule.

It must be said also, in the second place, that the natural prevalence of monogamy as the normal type of sexual relationship by no means excludes variations. Indeed it assumes them. "There is nothing precise in Nature," according to Diderot's saying. The line of Nature is a curve that oscillates from side to side of the norm. Such oscillations inevitably occur in harmony with changes in environmental conditions, and, no doubt, with peculiarities of personal disposition. So long as no arbitrary and merely external attempt is made to force Nature, the vital order is harmoniously maintained. Among certain species of ducks when males are in excess polyandric families are constituted,

the two males attending their female partner without jealousy, but when the sexes again become equal in number the monogamic order is restored. The natural human deviations from the monogamic order seem to be generally of this character, and largely conditioned by the social and economic environment. The most common variation, and that which most clearly possesses a biological foundation, is the tendency to polygyny, which is found at all stages of culture, even, in an unrecognized and more or less promiscuous shape, in the highest civilization.[1] It must be remembered, however, that recognized polygyny is not the rule even where it prevails; it is merely permissive; there is never a sufficient excess of women to allow more than a few of the richer and more influential persons to have more than one wife.

It has further to be borne in mind that a certain elasticity of the formal side of marriage while, on the one hand, it permits variations from the general monogamic order, where such are healthful or needed to restore a balance in natural conditions, on the other hand restrains such variations in so far as they are due to the disturbing influence of artificial constraint. Much of the polygyny, and polyandry also, which prevails among us to-day is altogether artificial and unnatural. Marriages which on a more natural basis would be dissolved cannot legally be dissolved, and consequently the parties to them, instead of changing their partners and so preserving the natural monogamic order, take on other additional partners and so introduce an unnatural polygamy. There will always be variations from the monogamic order and civilization is certainly not hostile to sexual variation. Whether we reckon these variations as legitimate or illegitimate, they will still take place; of that we may be certain. The path of social wisdom seems to lie on the one hand in making the marriage relationship flexible enough to reduce to a minimum these deviations—not because such deviations are intrinsically bad but because they ought not to be forced into existence—and on the other hand in according to these deviations when they occur such a measure of recognition as will deprive them of injurious influence and enable justice to be done to all the parties concerned. We too often forget that our failure to recognize such variations merely means that we accord in such cases an illegitimate permission to perpetrate injustice. In those parts of the world in which polygyny is recognized as a permissible variation a man is legally held to his natural obligations towards all his sexual mates and towards the children he has by those mates. In no part of the world is polygyny so prevalent as in Christendom; in no part

[1] "Where are real monogamists to be found?" asked Schopenhauer in his essay, "Ueber die Weibe." And James Hinton was wont to ask: "What is the meaning of maintaining monogamy? Is there any chance of getting it, I should like to know? Do you call English life monogamous?"

of the world is it so easy for a man to escape the obligations incurred by polygyny. We imagine that if we refuse to recognize the fact of polygyny, we may refuse to recognize any obligations incurred by polygyny. By enabling a man to escape so easily from the obligations of his polygamous relations we encourage him, if he is unscrupulous, to enter into them ; we place a premium on the immorality we loftily condemn.[1] Our polygamy has no legal existence, and therefore its obligations can have no legal existence. The ostrich, it was once imagined, hides its head in the sand and attempts to annihilate facts by refusing to look at them ; but there is only one known animal which adopts this course of action, and it is called Man.

Monogamy, in the fundamental biological sense, represents the natural order into which the majority of sexual facts will always naturally fall because it is the relationship which most adequately corresponds to all the physical and spiritual facts involved. But if we realize that sexual relationships primarily concern only the persons who enter into those relationships, and if we further realize that the interest of society in such relationships is confined to the children which they produce, we shall also realize that to fix by law the number of women with whom a man shall have sexual relationships, and the number of men with whom a woman shall unite herself, is more unreasonable than it would be to fix by law the number of children they shall produce. The State has a right to declare whether it needs few citizens or many ; but in attempting to regulate the sexual relationships of its members the State attempts an impossible task and is at the same time guilty of an impertinence.[2]

Undoubtedly the most common variation from normal monogamy has in all stages of human culture been polygyny or the sexual union of one man with more than one woman. It has sometimes been socially and legally recognized, and sometimes unrecognized, but in

[1] In a polygamous land a man is of course as much bound by his obligations to his second wife as to his first. Among ourselves the man's " second wife " is degraded with the name of " mistress," and the worse he treats her and her children the more his " morality " is approved, just as the Catholic Church, when struggling to establish sacerdotal celibacy, approved more highly the priest who had illegitimate relations with women than the priest who decently and openly married. If his neglect induces a married man's mistress to make known her relationship to him the man is justified in prosecuting her, and his counsel, assured of general sympathy, will state in court that " this woman has even been so wicked as to write to the prosecutor's wife ! "

[2] There is always a tendency, at certain stages of civilization, to insist on a merely formal and external uniformity, and a corresponding failure to see not only that such uniformity is unreal, but also that it has an injurious effect, in so far as it checks beneficial variations. The tendency is by no means confined to the sexual sphere. In England there is, for instance, a tendency to make building laws which enjoin, in regard to places of human habitation, all sorts of provisions that on the whole are beneficial, but which in practice act injuriously, because they render many simple and excellent human habitations absolutely illegal, merely because such habitations fail to conform to regulations which, under the circumstances, are not only unnecessary but mischievous.

either case it has not failed to occur. Polyandry, or the union of a woman with more than one man, has been comparatively rare and for intelligible reasons : men have most usually been in a better position, economically and legally, to organize a household with themselves as the centre ; a woman is, unlike a man, by nature and often by custom unfitted for intercourse for considerable periods at a time ; a woman, moreover, has her thoughts and affections more concentrated on her children. Apart from this, the biological masculine traditions point to polygyny much more than the feminine traditions point to polyandry. Although it is true that a woman can undergo a much greater amount of sexual intercourse than a man, it also remains true that the phenomena of courtship in nature have made it the duty of the male to be alert in offering his sexual attention to the female, whose part it has been to suspend her choice coyly until she is sure of her preference. Polygynic conditions have also proved advantageous, as they have permitted the most vigorous and successful members of a community to have the largest number of mates and so to transmit their own superior qualities.[1]

It is lamentable that at this period of the world's history, nearly 2,000 years after the wise legislators of Rome had completed their work, it should still be necessary to conclude that we are to-day only beginning to place marriage on a reasonable and humane basis. I have repeatedly pointed out how largely the Canon law has been responsible for this arrest of development. One may say, indeed, that the whole attitude of the Church, after it had once acquired complete worldly dominance, must be held responsible. In the earlier centuries the attitude of Christianity was, on the whole, admirable. It held aloft great ideals but it refrained from enforcing those ideals at all costs ; thus its ideals remained genuine and could not degenerate into mere hypocritical empty forms ; much flexibility was allowed when it seemed to be for human good and made for the avoidance of evil and injustice. But when the Church attained temporal power, and when that power was concentrated in the hands of Popes who subordinated moral and religious interests to ecclesiastical or even political interests, all the claims of reason and humanity were flung to the winds. The ideal was no more a fact than it was before, but it was now treated as a fact. Human relationships remained what they were before, as complicated and as various, but henceforth one

[1] Even in Christendom polygyny has not only often been advocated but occasionally permitted, and, under exceptional circumstances, even encouraged. Thus in the Venetian Republic, from the thirteenth century and on through its palmiest days, a second wife merely involved restitution of the first wife's dowry if she was endowed, and, if not, the payment of one hundred *lire*. In some districts of Germany, after the devastation of the Thirty Years War, a second husband or "assistant husband" was encouraged, though in other parts of Germany we hear of bigamous men being executed.

rigid pattern, however admirable as an ideal, worse than empty as a form, was arbitrarily set up, and all deviations from it treated either as non-existent or damnable. The vitality was crushed out of the most central human institutions, and they are only to-day beginning to lift their heads afresh.

If—to sum up—we consider the course which the regulation of marriage has run during the Christian era, the only period which immediately concerns us, it is not difficult to trace the main outlines. Marriage began as a private arrangement, which the Church, without being able to control, was willing to bless, as it also blessed many other secular affairs of men, making no undue attempt to limit its natural flexibility to human needs. Gradually and imperceptibly, however, without the medium of any law, the Church gained the complete control of marriage, co-ordinated it with its already evolved conceptions of the evil of lust, of the virtue of chastity, of the mortal sin of fornication, and, having through the influence of these dominating conceptions limited the flexibility of marriage in every possible direction, it placed it on a lofty but narrow pedestal as the sacrament of matrimony. For reasons which by no means lay in the nature of the sexual relationship, but which probably seemed cogent to sacerdotal legislators who assimilated it to ordination, matrimony was declared indissoluble. Nothing was so easy to enter as the gate of matrimony, but, after the manner of a mouse-trap, it opened inwards and not outwards ; once in, there was no way out alive. The Church's regulation of marriage while, like the celibacy of the clergy, it was a success from the point of view of ecclesiastical politics, and even at first from the point of view of civilization, for it at least introduced order into an often chaotic society, was in the long run a failure from the point of view of society and morals. On the one hand it drifted into absurd subtleties and quibbles ; on the other, not being based on either reason or humanity, it had none of that vital adaptability to the needs of life, which early Christianity, while holding aloft austere ideals, still largely retained. On the side of tradition this code of marriage law became awkward and impracticable ; on the biological side it was hopelessly false. The way was thus prepared for the Protestant re-introduction of the conception of marriage as a contract, that conception being, however, brought forward less on its merits than as a protest against the difficulties and absurdities of the Catholic Canon law. The contractive view, which still largely persists even to-day, speedily took over much of the Canon law doctrines of marriage, becoming in practice a kind of reformed and secularized Canon law. It was somewhat more adapted to modern needs, but it retained much of the rigidity of the Catholic marriage without its sacramental character, and it never made any attempt to become more than nominally contractive. It has been of the nature

of an incongruous compromise and has represented a transitional phase towards free private marriage. We can recognize that phase in the tendency, well-marked in all civilized lands, to an ever-increasing flexibility of marriage. The idea, and even the fact, of marriage by consent and divorce by failure of that consent, which we are now approaching, has never indeed been quite extinct. In the Latin countries it has survived with the tradition of Roman law; in the English-speaking countries it is bound up with the spirit of Puritanism which insists that in the things that concern the individual alone the individual himself shall be the supreme judge.

The marriage system of the future, as it moves along its present course, will resemble the old Christian system in that it will be willing to recognize a sacramental character in the sexual relationship, and it will resemble the civil conception in that it will insist that marriage, so far as it involves procreation, shall be publicly registered by the State. But in opposition to the Church it will recognize that marriage, in so far as it is purely a sexual relationship, is a private matter the conditions of which must be left to the persons who alone are concerned in it [1]; and in opposition to the civil theory it will recognize that marriage is in its essence a fact and not a contract, though it may give rise to contracts, so long as such contracts do not touch that essential fact. And in one respect it will go beyond either the ecclesiastical conception or the civil conception. Man has in recent times gained control of his own procreative powers, and that control involves a shifting of the centre of gravity of marriage, in so far as marriage is an affair of the State, from the vagina to the child which is the fruit of the womb. Marriage as a state institution will centre, not around the sexual relationship, but around the child which is the outcome of that relationship. In so far as marriage is an inviolable public contract it will be of such a nature that it will be capable of automatically covering with its protection every child that is born into the world, so that every child may possess a legal mother and a legal father. On the one side, therefore, marriage is tending to

[1] It is interesting to note that the social implication of the distinction between the sexual function and the procreative function was clearly foreseen by the pioneering insight of J. S. Mill long before birth control became prevalent. Referring in his Diary on March 26th, 1854 (*Letters*, vol. ii, p. 382) to the "absurdly disproportionate place" of sex in life, he goes on to say that to correct it two things are necessary: "Firstly, that women should cease to be set apart for this function and should be admitted to all other duties and occupations on a par with men; secondly, that what any persons may freely do with respect to sexual relations should be deemed to be an unimportant and purely private matter which concerns no one but themselves. If children are the result, then indeed commences a set of important duties towards the children, which society should enforce upon the parents much more strictly than it now does. But to have held any human being responsible to other people and to the world for the fact itself apart from this consequence will one day be thought one of the superstitions and barbarisms of the infancy of the human race."

become less stringent ; on the other side it is tending to become more stringent. On the personal side it is a sacred and intimate relationship with which the State has no concern ; on the social side it is the assumption of the responsible public sponsorship of a new member of the State. Some among us are working to further one of these aspects of marriage, some to further the other aspect. Both are indispensable to establish a perfect harmony. It is necessary to hold the two aspects of marriage apart, in order to do equal justice to the individual and to society, but in so far as marriage approaches its ideal state those two aspects become one.

We have now completed the discussion of marriage as it presents itself to the modern man born in what in medieval days was called Christendom. It is not an easy subject to discuss. It is indeed a very difficult subject, and only after many years is it possible to detect the main drift of its apparently opposing and confused currents when one is oneself in the midst of them. Yet it is worth while to attempt to climb to a height from which we can view the stream of social tendency in its true proportions and estimate its direction. When we have attained a wide vision of the solid biological facts of life, when we have grasped the great historical streams of tradition—which together make up the map of human affairs—we can face serenely the little social transitions which take place in our own age, as they have taken place in every age.

## CHAPTER XI

# THE ART OF LOVE

Marriage not only for Procreation—Theologians on the *Sacramentum Solationis*—Importance of the Art of Love—The Basis of Stability in Marriage and the Conditions for Right Procreation—The Art of Love the Bulwark against Divorce—The Unity of Love and Marriage a Principle of Modern Morality—Christianity and the Art of Love—Ovid—Sexual Initiation among Primitive Peoples—The Tendency to Spontaneous Development of the Art of Love in Early Life—Flirtation—Sexual Ignorance in Women—The Husband's Place in Sexual Initiation—Sexual Ignorance in Men—The Husband's Education for Marriage—The Ignorance of Husbands—Physical and Mental Results of Unskilful Coitus—Women Understand the Art of Love Better than Men—Ancient and Modern Opinions concerning Frequency of Coitus—Variation in Sexual Capacity—The Sexual Appetite—The Art of Love Based on the Biological Facts of Courtship—The Lover Compared to the Musician—The Proposal as a Part of Courtship—Divination in the Art of Love—The Importance of the Preliminaries in Courtship—The Unskilled Husband as a Cause of the Frigid Wife—The Difficulty of Courtship—The Evils of Incomplete Gratification in Women—Coitus Interruptus—Coitus Reservatus—The Human Method of Coitus—Variations in Coitus—Posture in Coitus—The Best Time for Coitus—The Influence of Coitus in Marriage—The Advantages of Absence in Marriage—The Risks of Absence—Jealousy—The Primitive Function of Jealousy—An Anti-Social Emotion—Jealousy Incompatible with the Progress of Civilization—The Possibility of Loving More than One Person at a Time—Platonic Friendship—The Maternal Element in Woman's Love—The Final Development of Conjugal Love—The Problem of Love One of the Greatest of Social Questions.

It will be clear from the preceding discussion that there are two elements in every marriage so far as that marriage is complete. On the one hand marriage is a union prompted by mutual love and only sustainable as a reality, apart from its more formal side, by the cultivation of such love. On the other hand marriage is a method for propagating the race and having its end in offspring. In the first aspect its aim is erotic, in the second parental. Both these ends have long been generally recognized. We find them set forth, for instance, in the marriage service of the Church of England, where it is stated that marriage exists both for " the mutual society, help and comfort that the one ought to have of the other," and for " the procreation of children." Without the factor of mutual love the proper conditions for procreation cannot exist ; without the factor of procreation the sexual union, however beautiful and sacred a relationship it may in itself be, remains, in essence, a private relationship, incomplete as a marriage and without public significance. It becomes necessary, therefore, to supplement the preceding discussion of marriage in its

general outlines by a final and more intimate consideration of marriage in its essence, as embracing the art of love and the science of procreation.

Those who seek to eliminate the erotic factor from marriage as unessential have made themselves heard from time to time. Even the ancients, Greeks and Romans alike, in their more severe moments advocated the elimination of the erotic element from marriage, and its confinement to extra-marital relationships, that is so far as men were concerned; for the erotic needs of married women they had no provision to make. Montaigne, soaked in classic traditions, has admirably set forth the reasons for eliminating the erotic interest from marriage: "One does not marry for oneself, whatever may be said; a man marries as much, or more, for his posterity, for his family; the usage and interest of marriage touch our race beyond ourselves. . . . Thus it is a kind of incest to employ, in this venerable and sacred parentage, the efforts and the extravagances of amorous license." This point of view easily commended itself to the early Christians, who, however, deliberately overlooked its reverse side, the establishment of erotic interests outside marriage. "To have intercourse except for procreation," said Clement of Alexandria, "is to do injury to Nature." While, however, that statement is true of the lower animals, it is not true of man, and especially not true of civilized man. The Catholic Church, therefore, while regarding with admiration a continence in marriage which excluded sexual relations except for the end of procreation, has followed St. Augustine in treating intercourse apart from procreation with considerable indulgence, as only a venial sin.

Protestant theologians have been inclined to go further, and therein they found some authority even in Catholic writers. John à Lasco, the Catholic Bishop who became a Protestant and settled in England during Edward VI's reign, was following many medieval theologians when he recognized the *sacramentum solationis*, in addition to *proles*, as an element of marriage. Cranmer, in his marriage service of 1549, stated that "mutual help and comfort," as well as procreation, enter into the object of marriage. Modern moralists speak still more distinctly.

Edward Carpenter remarks, in *Love's Coming of Age*, that sexual love is not only needed for physical creation, but also for spiritual creation. Bloch, again, in discussing this question concludes that "love and the sexual embrace have not only an end in procreation, they constitute an end in themselves, and are necessary for the life, development, and inner growth of the individual himself." And Olive Schreiner, in an eloquent passage in the Introduction of her *Woman and Labour*, wrote that "sex and the sexual relation between man and woman have distinct æsthetic, intellectual, and spiritual functions and ends, apart entirely from physical reproduction."

Most of our arts and sciences, it was said of old, were first invented for love's sake. And a modern man of science, Ostwald, has somewhere stated that discoverers and inventors often do their best work when in love. "Much of human achievement," says Parmelee, "has been due to the play function of sex."

It is argued by some, who admit mutual love as a constituent part of marriage, that such love, once recognized at the outset, may be taken for granted, and requires no further discussion; there is, they believe, no art of love to be either learnt or taught; it comes by nature. Nothing could be further from the truth, most of all as regards civilized man. Even the elementary fact of coitus needs to be taught. No one could take a more austerely Puritanic view of sexual affairs than Sir James Paget, and yet Paget declared that "Ignorance about sexual affairs seems to be a notable characteristic of the more civilized part of the human race. Among ourselves it is certain that the method of copulating needs to be taught, and that they to whom it is not taught remain quite ignorant about it." Philosophers have from time to time recognized the gravity of these questions and have discoursed concerning them; thus Epicurus, as Plutarch tells us, would discuss with his disciples various sexual matters, such as the proper time for coitus; but then, as now, there were obscurantists who would leave even the central facts of life to the hazards of chance or ignorance, and these presumed to blame the philosopher.

There is, however, much more to be learnt in these matters than the mere elementary facts of sexual intercourse. The art of love certainly includes such primary facts of sexual hygiene, but it involves also the whole erotic discipline of marriage and that is why its significance is so great, for the welfare and happiness of the individual, for the stability of sexual unions, and indirectly for the race, since the art of love is ultimately the art of attaining the right conditions for procreation.

"It seems extremely probable," wrote Professor Cope, half a century ago, "that if this subject could be properly understood and become, in the details of its practical conduct, a part of a written social science, the monogamic marriage might attain a far more general success than is often found in actual life." There can be no doubt that this is still the case. In the great majority of marriages success depends exclusively upon the knowledge of the art of love possessed by the two persons who enter into it. A life-long monogamic union may, indeed, persist in the absence of the slightest inborn or acquired art of love, out of religious resignation or sheer stupidity. But that attitude is now becoming less common. As we have seen, divorces are becoming more frequent and more easily obtainable in every civilized country. This is a tendency of civilization; it is the result of a demand that marriage should be a real relationship, and that

when it ceases to be real as a relationship it should also cease as a form. We cannot fight against it; and we should be wrong to fight against it even if we could.

Yet while we are bound to aid the tendency to divorce, and to insist that a valid marriage needs the wills of two persons to maintain it, it is difficult for anyone to argue that divorce is in itself desirable. It is always a confession of failure. Two persons, who, if they have been moved in the slightest degree by the normal and regular impulse of sexual selection, at the outset regarded each other as lovable, have, on one side or the other or on both, proved not lovable. There has been a failure in the fundamental art of love. If we are to counterbalance facility of divorce our only sound course is to increase the stability of marriage, and that is only possible by cultivating the art of love, the primal foundation of marriage.

It is by no means unnecessary to emphasize this point. There are still many persons who fail to realize it. There are even people who seem to imagine that it is unimportant whether or not pleasure is present in the sexual act. "I do not believe mutual pleasure in the sexual act has any particular bearing on the happiness of life," once remarked Dr. Howard A. Kelly. Such a statement means—if indeed it means anything—that the marriage tie has no "particular bearing" on human happiness. Even the most perverse ascetic of the Middle Ages scarcely ventured to make a statement so flagrantly opposed to the experiences of humanity, and the fact that a distinguished gynæcologist of the twentieth century could make it, with almost the air of stating a truism, is ample justification for the emphasis which it has nowadays become necessary to place on the art of love. "Uxor enim dignitatis nomen est, non voluptatis," was indeed an ancient Pagan dictum. But it is not in harmony with modern ideas. It was not even altogether in harmony with Christianity. For our modern morality, as Ellen Key well said, the unity of love and marriage is a fundamental principle.

The neglect of the art of love has not been a universal phenomenon; it is more especially characteristic of Christendom. The spirit of ancient Rome undoubtedly predisposed Europe to such a neglect, for with their rough cultivation of the military virtues and their inaptitude for the finer aspects of civilization the Romans were willing to regard love as a permissible indulgence, but they were not, as a people, prepared to cultivate it as an art. Their poets do not, in this matter, represent the moral feeling of their best people. It is indeed a significant fact that Ovid, the most distinguished Latin poet who concerned himself much with the art of love, associated that art not so much with morality as with immorality. As he viewed it, the art of love was less the art of retaining a woman in her home than the art of winning her away from it; it was the adulterer's art rather than

the husband's art. Such a conception would be impossible out of Europe, but it proved very favourable to the growth of the Christian attitude towards the art of love.

For Christianity the permission to yield to the sexual impulse at all was merely a concession to human weakness, an indulgence only possible when it was carefully hedged and guarded on every side. Almost from the first Christians began to cultivate the art of virginity, and they could not so dislocate their point of view as to approve of the art of love. All their passionate adoration in the sphere of sex went out towards chastity. Possessed by such ideals, they could only tolerate human love at all by giving to one special form of it a religious sacramental character, and even that sacramental halo imparted to love a quasi-ascetic character which precluded the idea of regarding love as an art.[1] Love gained a religious element but it lost a moral element, since, outside Christianity, the art of love is part of the foundation of sexual morality, wherever such morality in any degree exists. In Christendom love in marriage was left to shift for itself as best it might; the art of love was a dubious art which was held to indicate a certain commerce with immorality and even indeed to be itself immoral. That feeling was doubtless strengthened by the fact that Ovid was the most conspicuous master in literature of the art of love. His literary reputation—far greater than it now seems to us[2]—gave distinction to his position as the author of the chief extant text-book of the art of love. With Humanism and the Renaissance and the consequent realization that Christianity had overlooked one side of life, Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* was placed on a pedestal it had not occupied before or since. It represented a step forward in civilization; it revealed love not as a mere animal instinct or a mere pledged duty, but as a complex, humane, and refined relationship which demanded cultivation; *arte regendus amor*. Boccaccio made a wise teacher put Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* into the hands of the young.[3] In an age still oppressed by the medieval spirit, it was a

[1] Heinrich Meyer-Benfey, in pointing out that the Catholic sacramental conception of marriage licensed love, but failed to elevate it, regards Friedrich Schlegel's *Lucinde*, with all its defects, as the first expression of the unity of the senses, and the soul, and, as such, the basis of the new ethics of love. It must, however, be said that four hundred years earlier Pontano had expressed this same erotic unity far more robustly and wholesomely than Schlegel, though the Latin verse in which he wrote, fresh and vital as it is, remained without influence. Pontano's *Carmina*, including the "De Amore Conjugali," have been reprinted in a scholarly edition by Soldati.

[2] From the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries Ovid was, in reality, the most popular and influential classic poet. His works played a large part in moulding Renaissance literature, not least in England, where Marlowe translated his *Amores*, and Shakespeare, during the early years of his literary activity, was greatly indebted to him.

[3] Coleridge, in a note to his poem, "The Garden of Boccaccio," refers to the significance of this passage in the *Filocopo* in which the sage instructor of the young prince and the beautiful Biancofiore, as soon as they learnt their letters,

much needed text-book, but it possessed the fatal defect, as a text-book, of presenting the erotic claims of the individual as divorced from the claims of good social order. It never succeeded in establishing itself as a generally accepted manual of love, and in the eyes of many it served to stamp the subject it dealt with as one that lies outside the limits of good morals.

When, however, we take a wider survey, and inquire into the discipline for life that is imparted to the young in many parts of the world, we shall frequently find that the art of love, understood in varying ways, is an essential part of that discipline. Summary, though generally adequate, as are the educational methods of primitive peoples, they not seldom include a training in those arts which render a woman agreeable to a man and a man agreeable to a woman in the relationship of marriage, and it is often more or less dimly realized that courtship is not a mere preliminary to marriage, but a biologically essential part of the marriage relationship throughout.

It is enough here to bring forward a single example. Sexual initiation is carried out thoroughly in Azimba Land, Central Africa. H. Crawford Angus, the first European to visit the Azimba people, lived among them for a year, and has described the Chensamwali, or initiation ceremony of girls. " At the first sign of menstruation in a young girl, she is taught the mysteries of womanhood, and is shown the different positions for sexual intercourse. The vagina is handled freely, and if not previously enlarged (which may have taken place at the harvest festival when a boy and girl are allowed to ' keep house ' during the day-time by themselves, and when quasi-intercourse takes place) it is now enlarged by means of a horn or corn-cob, which is inserted and secured in place by bands of bark cloth. When all signs [of menstruation] have passed, a public announcement of a dance is given to the women in the village. At this dance no men are allowed to be present, and it was only with a great deal of trouble that I managed to witness it. The girl to be ' danced ' is led back from the bush to her mother's hut where she is kept in solitude to the morning of the dance. On that morning she is placed on the ground in a sitting position, while the dancers form a ring around her. Several songs are then sung with reference to the genital organs. The girl is then stripped and made to go through the mimic performance of sexual intercourse, and if the movements are not enacted properly, as is often the case when the girl is timid and bashful, one of the older women will take her place and show her how she is to perform. Many songs about the relation between men and women are sung, and the girl is instructed as to all her duties when she becomes a wife. She is

set them to study the " Holy Book, Ovid's Art of Love." A modern and very different estimate of the " Holy Book " is given by C. S. Lewis in his essay in literary history, *The Allegory of Love* (1936).

also instructed that during the time of her menstruation she is unclean, and that during her monthly period she must close her vulva with a pad of fibre used for the purpose. The object of the dance is to inculcate to the girl the knowledge of married life. The girl is taught to be faithful to her husband and to try to bear children, and she is also taught the various arts and methods of making herself seductive and pleasing to her husband, and of thus retaining him in her power."[1]

Whether or not Christianity is to be held responsible, it cannot be doubted that throughout Christendom there has been a lamentable failure to recognize the supreme importance, not only erotically but morally, of the art of love. Thirty years ago it was possible to say here that even in the great revival of sexual enlightenment taking place around us there is rarely even the faintest recognition that in sexual enlightenment the one thing essentially necessary is a knowledge of the art of love. For the most part, sexual instruction was purely negative, a mere string of thou-shalt-nots. It is now possible to present a better report. During recent years the art of love has become respectable. Even our most orthodox moralists admit, and sometimes emphasize, the importance for marriage of the art of love.

Why are public divorces so common and privately unhappy marriages still more common ? The answer we now often hear is, in effect, that the two partners were ignorant of the art of love. That is, for instance, made clear by Judge Bartlett, who speaks with authority since he long presided over the court of Reno in Nevada to which so many have flocked for divorce because of the facility there offered by the short residence demanded. The Judge has many home truths to tell concerning the lamentable failures in marriage of the couples who came before him, due largely to ignorance of the art of love.

Yet love-making is, like other arts, an art that is partly natural—" an art that nature makes "—and therefore it is a natural subject for learning and exercising in play. Children left to themselves tend, both playfully and seriously, to practice love, alike on the physical and the psychic sides. But this play is on its physical side sternly repressed by their elders, when discovered, and on its psychic side laughed at. Among the well-bred classes it is usually starved out at an early age.

After puberty, if not before, there is another form in which the art of love is largely experimented and practised, especially in England and America, the form of flirtation. In its elementary manifestations flirting is entirely natural and normal we may trace it even in animals ; it is simply the beginning of courtship, at the early stage when courtship may yet, if desired, be broken off. Under modern civilized conditions, however, flirtation is often more than this. These

1 H. Crawford Angus, " The Chensamwali," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1898, Heft 6.

conditions make marriage difficult; they make love and its engagements too serious a matter to be entered on lightly; they make actual sexual intercourse dangerous as well as disreputable. Flirtation adapts itself to those conditions. Instead of being merely the preliminary stage of normal courtship, it is developed into a form of sexual gratification as complete as due observation of the conditions already mentioned will allow. In some countries, perhaps especially in France, flirtation in this sense (*flirtage* as it was termed) met with much moral reprobation, and Forel also called it a phenomenon of degeneration. It is, however, merely the old-fashioned name for what now has various new names, and perhaps especially "petting." The interesting fact here is that "petting," even among moralists, is no longer viewed with unqualified reprobation, but often even with approval, though that approval is always qualified.

It is interesting to find that Newell Edson, who occupies the responsible position of consultant to the influential American Social Hygiene Association, in his "Discussion Outlines on Love, Courtship and Marriage,"[1] seriously discusses the values and limitations of habitual petting. Its values are, he states, that it gives a personal thrill, which should not, however, be on a merely selfish basis, that it provides the intimate acquaintance necessary before any final choice of a mate, and that, as he puts the matter, it gives social standing with a desired person, though it should never be a sort of payment for value received, since only selfishness claims reward. The limitations of repeated petting are, it is stated, that, if too easily attained, it cheapens personality, that it may break down the reserve necessary for self-respect, that it may lead to merely showing off one's control over the other sex, which is an improper use of what should be esteemed precious, that it stirs and teases deep-seated emotions which without complete satisfaction may leave one upset, that it may sweep one unintentionally off one's feet, and lead to later remorse at having sacrificed spiritual and permanent factors of love to merely temporary emotional factors, and that it may in either sex be physically injurious if unduly frequent.[2]

While petting in its natural forms thus has sound justification, alike as a method of testing a lover and of acquiring some small part of the art of love, it is not a complete preparation for love. This is sufficiently shown by the frequent inaptitude for the art of love, and even for the mere physical act of love, so frequently manifested both by men and women in the countries where it most flourishes.

This ignorance, not merely of the art of love but even of the physical

[1] *Journal of Social Hygiene*, Oct., Dec., 1935.

[2] It may be noted that the equivalent of petting may be found among primitive peoples. Thus in British New Guinea Seligman found that, with parental permission, a boy may sleep with a girl for the night, holding her in his arms, but usually without connection. If, however, connection should occur marriage usually follows; if not, the couple remain free, should they not suit each other.

facts of sexual love, is marked not only in women, but also in men, for the civilized man, as Fritsch long ago remarked, often knows less of the facts of the sexual life than a milkmaid. It shows itself differently, however, in the two sexes.

Among women sexual ignorance ranges from complete innocence of the fact that it involves any intimate bodily relationship at all to misapprehensions of the most various kind; some think that the relationship consists in lying side by side, many that intercourse takes place at the navel, not a few that the act occupies the whole night.

Dr. Katharine Davis, a few years ago, addressed the question "Had you been at all adequately prepared by instruction for the sex side of marriage?" to 1,000 supposedly well-educated married women. Of the 922 who answered the question, only 55·8 per cent.—little more than half—replied in the affirmative. Dr. Davis adds that even the inspection of these affirmative replies shows that "a very meagre amount of information was deemed necessary." For a large proportion it merely meant knowledge of the sex act, or of anatomy and physiology, or concerning frequency of intercourse, or of "the nature of men," or even merely an expectation of pain. It is unnecessary to quote the observations of other skilled inquirers. It may be taken that, alike in America and in England, this result fairly represents the general preparation of women for the art of love in marriage. And the degree of preparation in men, even if different in character, is on the same level.

It may be said, and with truth, that the present incompetent training of girls is likely to continue so long as the mothers of girls are content to demand nothing better. It may further be asserted that the art of love, with which we are here more especially concerned, can only be learnt by actual experience, an experience which our social traditions make it difficult for a girl to acquire with credit. Without here attempting to apportion the share of blame which falls to each cause, it remains unfortunate that a woman should so often enter marriage with the worst possible equipment of prejudices and misapprehensions, even when she believes, as often happens, that she knows all about it. Even with the best equipment, a woman, under present conditions, enters marriage at a disadvantage. She awakes to the full realization of love more slowly than a man, and, on the average, at a later age, so that her experiences of the life of sex before marriage have usually been of a much more restricted kind than her husband's. Thus, even with the best preparation, if often happens that it is not until several years after marriage that a woman clearly realizes her own sexual needs and her husband's ability to satisfy those needs. We cannot over-estimate the personal and social importance of a complete preparation for marriage, and the greater

the difficulties placed in the way of divorce the more weight necessarily attaches to that preparation.

It is commonly said that the duty of initiating the wife into the privileges and obligations of marriage properly belongs to the husband. Apart, however, from the fact that it is unjust to a woman to compel her to bind herself in marriage before she has fully realized what marriage means, it must also be said that there are many things necessary for women to know that it is unreasonable to expect a husband to explain. This is, for instance, notably the case as regards the more exhausting effects of coitus on a man as compared with a woman. The inexperienced bride cannot know beforehand that the frequently repeated orgasms which render her vigorous and radiant, may exert a depressing effect on her husband, and his masculine pride induces him to attempt to conceal that fact. The bride, in her innocence, is unconscious that her pleasure is then bought at her husband's expense, and that what is not excess to her may be a serious excess to him. The woman who knows (notably, for instance, a widow who remarries) is careful to guard her husband's health in this respect, by restraining her own ardour, for she realizes that a man is not willing to admit that he is incapable of satisfying his wife's desires.

The ignorance of women of all that concerns the art of love, and their total lack of preparation for the natural facts of the sexual life, would perhaps be of less evil augury for marriage if it were always compensated by the knowledge, skill, and considerateness of the husband. But that is by no means always the case. Within the ordinary range we find the large group of men whose knowledge of women before marriage has been mainly confined to prostitutes, and the not inconsiderable group of men who have had no intimate intercourse with women, their sexual experiences having been confined to masturbation or other auto-erotic manifestations, and to flirtation. Certainly the man of sensitive and intelligent temperament, whatever his training or lack of training, may succeed with patience and consideration in overcoming the difficulties placed in the way of love by the mixture of ignorances and prejudices which so often in women takes the place of an education for the erotic life. But it cannot be said that either of these two groups of men has been well equipped for the task. The training and experience which a man receives from a prostitute, even under fairly favourable conditions, scarcely form the right preparation for approaching a woman of his own class who has no intimate erotic experiences. The frequent result is that he is liable to waver between two opposite courses of action both of them mistaken. On the one hand, he may treat his bride as a prostitute, or as a novice to be speedily moulded into the sexual shape he is most accustomed to, thus running the risk either of perverting or of disgusting her. On the other hand, realizing that the purity and

dignity of his bride place her in an altogether different class from the women he has previously known, he may go to the opposite extreme of treating her with an exaggerated respect, and so fail either to arouse or to gratify her erotic needs. It is difficult to say which of these two courses of action is the more unfortunate ; the result of both, however, is frequently found to be that a nominal marriage never becomes a real marriage.

Yet there can be no doubt whatever that the other group of men, the men who enter marriage without any erotic experiences, run even greater risks. These are often the best of men, both as regards personal character and mental power. It is indeed astonishing to find how ignorant, both practically and theoretically, able and highly educated men may be concerning sexual matters.

Balzac (in his *Physiologie du Mariage*) compared the average husband to an orang-utan trying to play the violin. " Love, as we instinctively feel, is the most melodious of harmonies. Woman is a delicious instrument of pleasure, but it is necessary to know its quivering strings, study the pose of it, its timid keyboard, the changing and capricious fingering. How many orangs—men, I mean—marry without knowing what a woman is ! . . . Nearly all men marry in the most profound ignorance of women and of love." Neugebauer collected over 150 cases of injury to women in coitus. The causes were brutality, drunkenness of one or both parties, unusual position in coitus, disproportion of the organs, pathological conditions of the woman's organs. Eulenburg finds that vaginismus, a condition of spasmodic contraction of the vulva and exaggerated sensibility on the attempt to effect coitus, is due to forcible and unskilful attempts at the first coitus.

The occasional cases, however, of physical injury or of pathological condition produced by violent coitus at the beginning of marriage constitute but a small portion of the evidence which witnesses to the evil results of the prevalent ignorance regarding the art of love. As regards Germany, Fürbringer writes : " I am perfectly satisfied that the number of young married women who have a lasting painful recollection of their first sexual intercourse exceeds by far the number of those who venture to consult a doctor." As regards America, Dr. Katharine Davis found that, among nearly 1,000 women, over 25 per cent. had been repelled by the way marriage relations came into their experience ; and it is scarcely surprising that when she divided her married women into a Happy Group and an Unhappy Group, the percentage of those in the Happy Group who found their initial marriage relations attractive was over twice as great as in the corresponding unhappy group. As regards England, the following experience is instructive : A lady asked six married women in succession, privately on the same day concerning their bridal

experiences. To all, sexual intercourse had come as a shock ; two had been absolutely ignorant about sexual matters ; the others had thought they knew what coitus was, but were none the less shocked. These women were of the middle class, perhaps above the average in intelligence ; one was a doctor. That was now some years ago, and we may hope that conditions are improving.

Breuer and Freud pointed out that the bridal night is practically often a rape, and that it sometimes leads to hysteria, which is not cured until satisfying sexual relationships are established. Even when there is no violence, Kisch regards awkward and inexperienced coitus, leading to incomplete excitement of the wife, as the chief cause of dyspareunia, or absence of sexual gratification. One young bride, known to him, was so ignorant of the physical side of love, and so overwhelmed by her husband's first attempt at intercourse, that she fled from the house in the night, and nothing would ever persuade her to return to her husband. (It is worth noting that by Canon law, under such circumstances, the Church might hold the marriage invalid.) Kisch considers, also, that wedding tours are a mistake ; since the fatigue, the excitement, the long journeys, sight-seeing, false modesty, bad hotel arrangements, often combine to affect the bride unfavourably and produce the germs of serious illness. This is undoubtedly the case.

The extreme psychic importance of the manner in which the act of defloration is accomplished is strongly emphasized by Otto Adler. He regards it as a frequent cause of permanent sexual anæsthesia. " This first moment in which the man's individuality attains its full rights often decides the whole of life. The unskilled, over-excited husband can then implant the seed of feminine insensibility, and by continued awkwardness and coarseness develop it into permanent anæsthesia."

All her life long, a wistful and trembling woman will preserve the recollection of a brutal wedding night, and, often enough, it remains a perpetual source of inhibition every time that the husband seeks anew to gratify his own desires without adapting himself to his wife's desires. " I have seen an honest woman shudder with horror at her husband's approach," wrote Diderot long ago in his essay " Sur les Femmes " ; " I have seen her plunge in the bath and feel herself never sufficiently washed from the stain of duty." The same may still be said of a vast number of women, victims of a pernicious system of morality which has taught them false ideas of " conjugal duty " and has failed to teach their husbands the art of love.

Women, when their fine natural instincts have not been hopelessly perverted by the pruderies and prejudices which are so diligently instilled into them, understand the art of love more readily than men. Even when little more than children they can often take the cue that is given to them. Much more than is the case with men, at all events

under civilized conditions, the art of love is with them an art that Nature makes. They always know more of love, as Montaigne long since said, than men can teach them, for it is a discipline that is born in their blood.[1]

The extensive inquiries of Sanford Bell showed that the emotions of sex-love may appear as early as the third year. It must also be remembered that, both physically and psychically, girls are more precocious and earlier mature than boys. Thus, by the time she has reached the age of puberty a girl has had time to become an accomplished mistress of the minor arts of love. That the age of puberty is for girls the age of love seems to be widely recognized by the popular mind.

This matter of the sexual precocity of girls has an important bearing on the question of the "age of consent," or the age at which it should be legal for a girl to consent to sexual intercourse. Until modern times there has been a tendency to set a very low age (even as low as ten) as the age above which a man commits no offence in having sexual intercourse with a girl. In recent years there has been a tendency to run to the opposite and equally unfortunate extreme of raising it to a very late age. It is probable that, as Parmelee has argued in his *Personality and Conduct*, there is no need for fixing any arbitrary "age of consent," the existing laws against rape being sufficient to cover all enforced sexual intercourse. If not, sixteen seems to be the highest at which the limit should be set in temperate climates. Such enactments, however, it must be recognized, are arbitrary, artificial, and unnatural. They do not rest on a sound biological basis, and cannot be enforced by the common sense of the community. There is no proper analogy between the age of legal majority which is fixed, approximately, with reference to the ability to comprehend abstract matters of intelligence, and the age of sexual maturity which occurs much earlier, both physically and psychically, and is determined in women by a precise biological event: the completion of puberty in the onset of menstruation. Among peoples living under natural conditions in all parts of the world it is recognized that a girl becomes sexually a woman at puberty; at that epoch she receives her initiation into adult life and may become a wife and a mother. To declare that the act of intercourse with a woman who, by the natural instinct of mankind generally, is regarded as old enough for all duties of womanhood, is a criminal act of rape, punishable by imprisonment for life, can only be considered an abuse of language,

[1] It is a significant fact that, even in the matter of information, women, notwithstanding much ignorance and inexperience, are often better equipped for marriage than men. As Fürbringer remarks, although the wife is usually more chaste at marriage than the husband, yet "she is generally the better informed partner in matters pertaining to the married state, in spite of occasional astonishing confessions."

and, what is worse, an abuse of law, even if we leave all psychological and moral considerations out of the question, for it deprives the conception of rape of all that renders it naturally and properly revolting.

It may be necessary to add that the abolition of the " age of consent " by no means implies that intercourse with young girls should be encouraged. Here, however, we are not in the sphere of law. It is the natural tendency of the well-born and well-nurtured girl under civilized conditions to hold herself in reserve, and the pressure whereby that tendency is maintained and furthered must be supplied by the whole of her environment, primarily by the intelligent reflection of the girl herself when she has reached the age of adolescence. To foster in a young woman who has passed the epoch of puberty the notion that she has no responsibility in the guardianship of her own body and soul is out of harmony with modern feeling, as well as unfavourable to the training of women for the world. The States which have been induced to adopt a high " age of consent " have, indeed, thereby made an abject confession of their inability to maintain a decent moral level by more legitimate means ; they may profitably serve as a warning rather than as an example.[1]

The knowledge of women cannot, however, replace the ignorance of men, but, on the contrary, merely serves to reveal it. For in the art of love the man must necessarily take the initiative. It is he who must first unseal the mystery of the intimacies and audacities which the woman's heart may hold. The risk of meeting with even the shadow of contempt or disgust is too serious to allow a woman, even a wife, to reveal the secrets of love to a man who has not shown himself to be an initiate.[2] Numberless are the jovial and contented husbands who have never suspected, and will never know, that their wives carry about with them,sometimes with silent resentment, the ache of mysterious *taboos*. The feeling that there are delicious privacies and privileges which she has never been asked to take, or forced to accept, often erotically divorces a wife from a husband who never realizes what he has missed.[3] The case of such husbands is all the harder

[1] I have discussed this question in another book, *The Task of Social Hygiene* (p. 209 *et seq.*) and shown that to enact a high " age of consent " is futile.

[2] " She never loses her self-respect nor my respect for her," a man writes in a letter, " simply because we are desperately in love with one another, and everything we do—some of which the lowest prostitute might refuse to do—seems but one attempt after another to translate our passion into action. I never realized before, not that to the pure all things are pure, indeed, but that to the lover nothing is indecent. Yes, I have always felt it, to love her is a liberal education." It is obviously only the existence of such an attitude as this in her partner that can enable a pure woman to be passionate.

[3] " To be really understood," as Rafford Pyke well says, " to say what she likes, to utter her innermost thoughts in her own way, to cast aside the traditional conventions that gall her and repress her, to have someone near her with whom she can be quite frank, and yet to know that not a syllable of what she says

because, for the most part, all that they have done is the result of the morality that has been preached to them. They have been taught from boyhood to be strenuous and manly and clean-minded, to seek by all means to put out of their minds the thought of women or the longing for sensuous indulgence. They have been told that only in marriage is it right or even safe to approach women. They have acquired the notion that sexual indulgence and all that appertains to it is, if not low and degrading, at all events a mere natural necessity, at the best a duty to be accomplished in a direct, honourable, and straightforward manner. No one seems to have told them that love is an art, and that to gain real possession of a woman's soul and body is a task that requires the whole of a man's best skill and insight. It may well be that when a man learns his lesson too late he is inclined to turn ferociously on the society that by its conspiracy of pseudo-morality has done its best to ruin his life, and that of his wife. In some of these cases husband or wife or both are finally attracted to a third person, and a divorce enables them to start afresh with better experience under happier auspices. But as things are at present that is a sad and serious process, for many impossible. They are happier, as Milton pointed out, whose trials of love before marriage "have been so many divorces to teach them experience."

I have desired to emphasize that the art of love should be for a large part the outcome of personal inspiration and personal experience. It is not a matter of rules, and cannot be adequately learnt from books. But there is always a craving for text-books among those who are doubtful of their own insight. Until recent years there have been no easily accessible books to satisfy this demand, if we put aside the long antiquated Ovid and the Indian Vatsyayana who, indeed, for all his fantasies and superstitions, in some respects cannot be bettered. There is, however, a small pioneering manual of the nineteenth century which must not be overlooked. This is Dr. Jules Guyot's *Bréviaire de l'Amour Expérimental*, concise and written in an admirable style, which must be regarded as a little masterpiece. Guyot, born in 1807, was a man of the highest character and the most distinguished and versatile ability, whose work in the world, though less in medicine than in physics and agriculture, was of recognized originality and influence. He wrote the *Bréviaire* in 1859 and it circulated among some eminent friends who greatly approved of it, notably Claude Bernard, George Sand, Sainte-Beuve, and even some ecclesiastics of the highest rank in the Church. But he made no attempt to publish it, and in those days it was feared it might be seized on by Don Juans and Lovelaces ; in 1866 he gave this Note, as he modestly called it,

will be misinterpreted or mistaken, but rather felt just as she feels it all—how wonderfully sweet is this to every woman, and how few men are there who can give it to her ! "

to his friend Gorges Barral with the right of publication when the time might seem suitable. Shortly before his death in 1872 he expressed a renewed wish for publication, but it was not till ten years later that this took place, and since then the *Bréviaire* has had a continuous sale in French. It was not, however, until 1931 that an English translation (by Mrs. Pinchot) was published in New York, under the title of *A Ritual for Married Lovers* by the National Committee on Maternal Health, and in 1933 in London. The translation is furnished with notes by the distinguished gynæcologist, Dr. Dickinson, who points out how little the details of the book are out of date. During the present century there have been tentative efforts both in America and England—guarded so far as possible, not always quite successfully, against the attack of ancient " obscenity " laws—to meet the now recognized need for such books. One of the first to attract wide attention, for it is indeed probably in its own way the most practically useful—it has even been termed a " classic "—is *Sane Sex Life and Sane Sex Living*, published in Boston in 1919 as being by " H. W. Long, M.D.,. Captain M.R.C.," and still circulating in the hands of other publishers in no way responsible for its original production. But the ascription to " Dr. H. W. Long " is a fiction ; the real author was here drawing the long bow, and—whether or not " Dr. H. W. Long " ever existed—he was certainly not the author of this book, which, even by its style, could hardly have been produced by a writer with medical training, and is indeed apt to arouse some amusement in a medical reader. The real author was an American lecturer and writer, with whom I was in friendly correspondence during sone fifteen years, and who was known under his own name as the author of books on educational and allied subjects which won high approval. He was also much interested in the subject of sex, and in the most correct manner as a devoted husband during over fifty years. Impressed by the ignorance he found to exist in this matter he was moved to write privately—" with fear and trembling," as he later told me, on account of the magnitude and complexity of the task—a manual of instruction which he circulated among a few young married couples of his own circle by whom it was found very useful. In 1915, a little later, he presented to me a typescript copy of this manual, under its present title, in case I might find any interest in glancing through it. It seemed to me that though—and indeed because—it was so unconventional in manner it should prove generally helpful to the vast class of inexperienced young married people, and I urged the author to make it accessible beyond his own small circle. In reply he wrote : " I confess that I was not a little surprised at your suggestion that it be put into general circulation. I had no such purpose in mind when I wrote it, and I am wondering if it is really worthy of such use. I wrote it for a few young friends of mine who needed such

knowledge." He also wondered if the book might not be considered "contrary to law." No doubt it was the fear of that risk which induced him, or his publisher, to adopt the fictional assumption of medical authorship, which, I need not say, had never been suggested by me. When the book appeared it corresponded for the most part with the original typescript, but was prefaced by a "Foreword" addressed to the author's "medical brothers." He died in 1928 at an advanced age. Now that the usefulness of his manual is widely recognized it seems time that the author should receive the credit due to him. I have no right to reveal his name, but since I may be held indirectly responsible for the publication of the book, I am entitled to explain its genesis. From England, more recently, we have a manual, *The Sex Factor in Marriage*, by Dr. Helena Wright, which deals summarily, but in a frank and simple manner, with the essential facts of the anatomy, physiology, and psychology of the sex-act; it has been widely appreciated. A work of quite different character, more detailed and technical, restricted in sale to the medical profession and first published in 1926, is by the Dutch gynæcologist, the late Dr. Van de Velde. It has had an enormous circulation in many languages, and in the English edition is entitled *Ideal Marriage: Its Physiology and Technique.*[1]

The general ignorance concerning the art of love may be gauged by the fact that perhaps the question in this matter hitherto most frequently asked is the crude question how often sexual intercourse should take place. That is a question, indeed, which has occupied the founders of religion, the law-givers, and the philosophers of mankind, from the earliest times. Zoroaster said it should be once in every nine days. The laws of Manes allowed intercourse during fourteen days of the month, but a famous ancient Hindu physician, Susruta, prescribed it six times a month, except during the heat of summer when it should be once a month, while other Hindu authorities say three or four times a month. Solon's requirement of the citizen that intercourse should take place three times a month fairly agrees with Zoroaster's. Mohammed, in the Koran, decrees intercourse once a week. The Jewish Talmud is more discriminating, and distinguishes between different classes of people; on the vigorous and healthy young man, not compelled to work hard, once a day is imposed, on the ordinary working man twice a week, on learned men once a week. Luther considered twice a week the proper frequency of intercourse.

It will be observed that, as we might expect, these estimates tend

[1] An excellent book for more popular use is Dr. M. J. Exner's *Sexual Side of Marriage.* Dr. Isabel Hutton's *Hygiene of Marriage* has been widely found helpful, and Dr. Wolbarst's *Generations of Adam* treats in a sensibly liberal spirit with marriage and other aspects of the sex life. Numerous small and often useful guides to the practical exercise of the marriage relationship have also appeared.

to allow a greater interval in the earlier ages when erotic stimulation was probably less and erotic erethism probably rare, and to involve an increased frequency as we approach modern civilization. It will also be observed that variation occurs within fairly narrow limits. This is probably due to the fact that these law-givers were in all cases men. Women law-givers would certainly have shown a much greater tendency to variation, since the variations of the sexual impulse are greater in women. Thus Zenobia required the approach of her husband once a month, provided that impregnation had not taken place the previous month, while another queen went far to the other extreme, for we are told that a queen of Aragon, after mature deliberation, ordained six times a day as the proper rule in a legitimate marriage.

It may be remarked, in passing, that the estimates of the proper frequency of sexual intercourse may always be taken to assume that there is a cessation during the menstrual period. This is especially the case as regards early periods of culture when intercourse at this time is usually regarded as either dangerous or sinful, or both. Under civilized conditions, the inhibition is due to æsthetic reasons, the wife, even if she desires intercourse, feeling a repugnance to be approached at a time when she regards herself as "disgusting," and the husband easily sharing this attitude. It may, however, be pointed out that the æsthetic objection is largely the result of the superstitious horror of water which is still widely felt at this time, and would, to some extent, disappear if a more scrupulous cleanliness were observed. It remains a good general rule to abstain from sexual intercourse during the menstrual period, but in some cases there may be adequate reason for breaking it. This is so when desire is specially strong at this time, or when intercourse is physically difficult at other times but easier during the relaxation of the parts caused by menstruation. It must be remembered also that the time when the menstrual flow is beginning to cease is frequently the time when desire is strongest.

In modern times the physiologists and physicians who have expressed any opinion on this subject have usually come very near to Luther's dictum. Haller said that intercourse should not be much more frequent than twice a week. Acton said once a week, and so also Hammond, even for healthy men between the ages of twenty-five and forty. Fürbringer only slightly exceeds this estimate by advocating from fifty to one hundred single acts in the year. Forel advises two or three times a week for a man in the prime of manhood, but he adds that for some healthy and vigorous men once a month appears to be excess. Mantegazza, in his *Hygiene of Love*, also stated that, for a man between twenty and thirty, two or three times a week represents the proper amount of intercourse, and between the ages of thirty and forty-five, twice a week. Guyot recommended every three days. Among Dr. Katharine Davis's married women once

or twice a week in early married life was the prevailing frequency of intercourse, and these included the largest proportion of those acknowledging a "happy" married life. I possess from the private diary of a happily married couple the dates of every act of intercourse from marriage to death, which came to both within a day of each other, after thirty-four years of married life. At marriage in 1898 the husband was thirty-five and the wife thirty-three. During the first fortnight of married life intercourse was once daily. After that, for about the next ten years, it was, roughly but not regularly, about once every three days. Then frequency gradually diminished, and during the last ten years, excluding the last three when, evidently owing to the failing health of one or both partners, there was no intercourse at all, it usually took place about once a month. After the wife's menstruation ceased, in 1917, she had numerous periods of illness, involving cessation of intercourse and usually lasting for several months.

It seems unnecessary to lay down any general rules regarding the frequency of coitus. Individual desire and individual aptitude, even within the limits of health, vary enormously. Moreover if we recognize that the restraint of desire is sometimes desirable, and often necessary for prolonged periods, it is as well to refrain from any appearance of asserting the necessity of sexual intercourse at frequent and regular intervals. The question is chiefly of importance in order to guard against excess, or even against the attempt to live habitually close to the threshold of excess. Many authorities are, therefore, careful to point out that it is inadvisable to be too definite. Thus Erb, while remarking that, for some, Luther's dictum represents the extreme maximum, adds that others can go far beyond that amount with impunity, and he considers that such variations are congenital. Ribbing, again, while expressing general agreement with Luther's rule, protested against any attempt to lay down laws for everyone, and was inclined to say that as often as one likes is a safe rule, so long as there are no bad after-effects.

It seems to be generally agreed that bad effects from excess in coitus, when they do occur, are rare in women. In cases of sexual excess great physical exhaustion, with suspicion and delusions, has observed. Hutchinson recorded three cases of temporary blindness, all in men, the result of sexual excess after marriage. The old medical authors attributed many evil results to excess in coitus, but one may easily perceive that *post* was often mistaken for *propter*.

There is, however, another consideration which can scarcely escape the reader of the present work. Nearly all the estimates of the desirable frequence of coitus are framed to suit the supposed physiological

needs of the husband,[1] and they appear usually to be framed in the same spirit of exclusive attention to those needs as though the physiological needs of the evacuation of the bowels or the bladder were in question. But sexual needs are the needs of two persons, of the husband and of the wife. It is not enough to ascertain the needs of the husband ; it is also necessary to ascertain the needs of the wife. The resultant must be a harmonious adjustment of these two groups of needs. That consideration alone, in conjunction with the wide variations of individual needs, suffices to render any definite rules of trifling value.

Whenever the sexual act is repeated frequently within a short time it is rarely indeed that the husband can keep pace with the wife. It is true that the woman's sexual energy is aroused more slowly and with more difficulty than the man's, but as it becomes aroused its momentum increases. The man, whose energy is easily aroused, is easily exhausted ; the woman has often scarcely attained her energy until after the first orgasm is over. It is sometimes a surprise to a young husband, happily married, to find that the act of sexual intercourse which completely satisfies him has only served to arouse his wife's ardour. The young and vigorous woman, who has lived a chaste life, sometimes feels when she commences sexual relationships as though she really required several husbands and needed intercourse at least once a day, though later when she becomes adjusted to married life she reaches the conclusion that her desires are not abnormally excessive. The husband has to adjust himself to his wife's needs, through his sexual force when he possesses it, and, if not, through his skill and consideration. The rare men who possess a genital potency which they can exert to the gratification of women without injury to themselves have been, by Benedikt, termed "sexual athletes," and he remarks that such men easily dominate women. Casanova has been regarded as the type of the sexual athlete.

At this stage we reach the fundamental elements of the art of love. We have seen that many moral practices and moral theories which have been widely current in Christendom have developed traditions still by no means extinct among us, which were profoundly antagonistic to the art of love. The idea grew up of "marital duties," of "conjugal rights."[2] The husband had the right and the duty to perform sexual

1 Mohammed, who often displayed a consideration for women rare in the founders of religions, is an exception. His prescription of once a week represented the right of the wife, quite independently of the number of wives a man might possess.

2 How fragile the claim of "conjugal rights" is, may be sufficiently proved by the fact that it is now considered by many that the very term "conjugal rights" arose merely by a mistake for "conjugal rites." Before 1733, when legal proceedings were in Latin, the term used was *obsequies*, and "rights," instead of "rites," seems to have been merely a typesetter's error (see *Notes and*

intercourse with his wife, whatever her wishes in the matter might be, while the wife had the duty and the right (the duty in her case being usually put first) to submit to such intercourse, which she was frequently taught to regard as something low and merely physical, an unpleasant and almost degrading necessity which she would do well to put out of her thoughts as speedily as possible. It is not surprising that such an attitude towards marriage has been highly favourable to conjugal unhappiness, more especially that of the wife, and it has tended to promote adultery and divorce. We might have been more surprised had it been otherwise.

The art of love is based on the fundamental natural fact of courtship; and courtship is the effort of the male to make himself acceptable to the female. "The art of love," said Vatsyayana, one of the greatest of authorities, "is the art of pleasing women." "A man must never permit himself a pleasure with his wife," said Balzac, "which he has not the skill first to make her desire." The whole art of love is there. Women, naturally and instinctively, seek to make themselves desirable to men, even to men whom they are supremely indifferent to, and the woman who is in love with a man, by an equally natural instinct, seeks, even unconsciously, to shape herself to the measure which individually pleases him. This tendency is not really modified by the fundamental fact that in these matters it is only the arts that Nature makes which are truly effective. It is finally by what he is that a man arouses a woman's deepest emotions of sympathy or of antipathy, and he is often pleasing her more by displaying his fitness to play a great part in the world outside than by any acquired accomplishments in the arts of courtship. When, however, the serious and intimate play of physical love begins, the woman's part is, even biologically, on the surface the more passive part.[1] She is, on the physical side, inevitably the instrument in love; it must be his hand and his bow which evoke the music.

In speaking of the art of love, however, it is impossible to disentangle completely the spiritual from the physical. The very attempt to do so is, indeed, a fatal mistake. The man who can only perceive the physical side of the sexual relationship is, as Hinton was accustomed to say, on a level with the man who, in listening to a sonata of Beethoven on the violin, is only conscious of the physical fact that a horse's tail is being scraped against a sheep's entrails.

*Queries*, May 16th, 1891; May 6th, 1899). This explanation, it should be added, only applies to the consecrated term, for there can be no doubt that the underlying idea has an existence quite independent of the term.

[1] It is well recognized by erotic writers, however, that women may take a comparatively active part. Thus Vatsyayana says that sometimes the woman may take the man's position, and with flowers in her hair and smiles mixed with sighs and bent head, caressing him and pressing her breasts against him, say: "You have been my conqueror; it is my turn to make you cry for mercy."

The image of the musical instrument constantly recurs to those who write of the art of love since Balzac's comparison of the unskilful husband to the orang-utan attempting to play the violin. Guyot, in his *Bréviaire*, falls on to the same comparison: "There are an immense number of ignorant, selfish, and brutal men who give themselves no trouble to study the instrument which God has confided to them, and do not so much as suspect that it is necessary to study it in order to draw out its slightest chords."

That such love corresponds to the woman's need there cannot be any doubt. A developed woman desires to be loved, said Ellen Key, not "en mâle" but "en artiste." "She will only belong to a man who continues to long for her even when he holds her locked in his arms. And when such a woman breaks out: 'You want me, but you cannot caress me, you cannot tell what I want,' then that man is judged." Love is indeed, as Remy de Gourmont remarked, a delicate art, for which, as for painting or music, only some are apt.

It must not be supposed that the demand on the lover and husband to approach a woman in the same spirit, with the same consideration and skilful touch as a musician takes up his instrument, is merely a demand made by modern women who are probably neurotic or hysterical. We have sought to befool ourselves by giving an illegitimate connotation to the word "brutal"; consideration and respect for the female is all but universal in the sexual relationships of the animals below man. It is only at the furthest remove from the "brutes," among civilized men, that sexual "brutality" is at all common, and even there it is chiefly the result of ignorance. "That rape is an exclusively human character seems to be beyond serious doubt," says a zoological authority, Gerrit Miller, Jr.[1] If we go as low as the insects, who have been disciplined by no family life, and are generally counted as careless and wanton, we may sometimes find this illustrated, and the extreme consideration of the male for the female whom yet he holds firmly beneath him, the tender preliminaries, the extremely gradual approach to the supreme sexual act, may well furnish an admirable lesson. Nature and Art are one.

This greater difficulty and delay on the part of women in responding to the erotic excitation of courtship is really fundamental and covers the whole of woman's erotic life, from the earliest age when coyness and modesty develop. A woman's love develops much more slowly

[1] "I have been unable," he states, "to discover a trustworthy record of its occurrence in any mammal except Man. Its possibility may be regarded as one of the anatomical by-products of the upright human position, a consequence of the re-modelling of the pelvic region in such a manner as to do away with the necessity of willingness and co-operation on the part of the female during sexual intercourse." (*Journal of Mammalogy*, Nov., 1928.) For general sex behaviour of the apes see Yerkes, *The Great Apes*, and Zuckerman, *The Social Life of Monkeys and Apes*.

than a man's. There is psychological significance in the fact that a man's desire for a woman tends to arise spontaneously, while a woman's desire for a man tends to be aroused gradually, in the measure of her complexly developing relationship to him. Hence her sexual emotion is often less abstract, more intimately associated with the individual lover in whom it is centred. "The way to my senses is through my heart," wrote Mary Wollstonecraft to her lover Imlay, "but, forgive me! I think there is sometimes a shorter cut to yours." She spoke for the best, if not for the largest part, of her sex. A man often reaches the full limit of his physical capacity for love at a single step, and it would appear that his psychic limits are often not more difficult to reach. This is the solid fact underlying the more hazardous statement, so often made, that woman is monogamic and man polygamic.

On the more physical side, Guttceit states that a month after marriage not more than two women out of ten have experienced the full pleasure of sexual intercourse, and it may not be for six months, a year, or even till after the birth of several children, that a woman experiences the full enjoyment of the physical relationship, and even then only with a man she completely loves, so that the conditions of sexual gratification are much more complex in women than in men.

It will, of course, be apparent that the method of stating the difference which commended itself to Mary Wollstonecraft, Ellen Key, and others, is not strictly correct, and the chastest woman, after, for example, taking too hot a bath, may find that her heart is not the only path through which her senses may be affected. The senses are the only channels to the external world which we possess, and love must come through these channels or not at all. The difference, however, seems to be a real one, if, as we have reason to believe, there are in women (1) preferential sensory paths of sexual stimuli, such as, apparently, a predominance of tactile and auditory paths as compared with men; (2) a more massive, complex, and delicately poised sexual mechanism; and, as a result of this, (3) eventually a greater amount of nervous and cerebral sexual irradiation. It must be remembered at the same time, that while this distinction represents a real tendency in sexual differentiation, with an organic and not merely traditional basis, it has about it nothing whatever that is absolute. There are a vast number of women whose sexual facility, again by natural tendency and not merely by acquired habits, is as marked as that of any man, if not more so. In the sexual field the range of variability is greater in women than in men.

The fact that love is an art, a method of drawing music from an instrument, and not the mere commission of an act by mutual consent, makes any verbal agreement to love of little moment. If love were a matter of contract, of simple intellectual consent, of question and answer, it would never have come into the world at all. Love appeared

as art from the first, and the subsequent developments of the summary methods of reason and speech cannot abolish that fundamental fact. This is scarcely realized by those ill-advised lovers who consider that the first step in courtship—and perhaps even the whole of courtship—is for a man to ask a woman to be his wife. That is so far from being the case that it constantly happens that the premature exhibition of so large a demand at once and for ever damns all the wooer's chances. It is lamentable, no doubt, that so grave and fateful a matter as that of marriage should so often be decided without calm deliberation and reasonable forethought. But sexual relationships can never, and should never, be merely a matter of cold calculation. When a woman is suddenly confronted by the demand that she should yield herself up as a wife to a man who has not yet succeeded in gaining her affections she will not fail to find—provided she is lifted above the cold-hearted motives of self-interest—that there are many sound reasons why she should not do so. And having thus squarely faced the question in cool blood and decided it, she will henceforth, probably, meet that wooer with a tunic of steel enclosing her breast.

It is worthy of note that the recognition that direct speech is out of place in courtship must not be regarded as a refinement of civilization. Among so-called primitive peoples everywhere it is well recognized that the offer of love, and its acceptance or its refusal, must be made by action symbolically, and not by the crude method of question and answer. Among the Indians of Paraguay, who allow much sexual freedom to their women, but never buy or sell love, Mantegazza stated that a girl of the people will come to your door or window and timidly, with a confused air, ask you, in the Guarani tongue, for a drink of water. But she will smile if you innocently offer her water. Among the Tarahumari Indians of Mexico, with whom the initiative in courting belongs to the women, the girl takes the first step through her parents, then she throws small pebbles at the young man ; if he throws them back the matter is concluded. In many parts of the world it is the woman who chooses her husband, and she frequently adopts a symbolical method of proposal. Except when the commercial element predominates in marriage, a similar method is frequently adopted by men also in making proposals of marriage.

It is not only at the beginning of courtship that the act of love has little room for formal declarations, for the demands and the avowals that can be clearly defined in speech. The same rule holds even in the most intimate relationships of old lovers, throughout the married life. The permanent element in modesty, which survives every sexual initiation to become intertwined with all the exquisite impudicities of love, combines with a true erotic instinct to rebel against formal demands, against verbal affirmations or denials. Love's

requests cannot be made in words, nor truthfully answered in words; a fine divination is still needed as long as love lasts.

The old Hindu erotic writers attributed great importance alike to the man's attentiveness to the woman's erotic needs, and to his skill and consideration in the preliminaries of the sexual act. He must do all that he can to procure her pleasure, says Vatsyāyana. When she is on her bed and perhaps absorbed in conversation, he gently unfastens the knot of her lower garment If she protests he closes her mouth with kisses. Some authors, Vatsyayana remarks, hold that the lover should begin by sucking the nipples of her breasts. When erection occurs he touches her with his hands, softly caressing the various parts of her body. He should always press those parts of her body towards which she turns her eyes. If she is shy, and it is the first time, he will place his hands between her thighs which she will instinctively press together. If she is young he will put his hands on her breasts, and she will no doubt cover them with her own. By the way in which she receives his caresses he will divine what pleases her most in union.

In the lengthy preface to the French translation of Vatsyayana Lamairesse points out the superiority of Indian erotic art to that of the Latin poets by its loftier spirit, and greater purity and idealism. It is throughout marked by respect for women, and its spirit is expressed in the well-known proverb: "Thou shalt not strike a woman even with a flower."

The importance of the preliminary titillation of the sexual organs has been emphasized by a long succession alike of erotic writers and physicians, from Ovid onwards. Eulenburg considers it is sometimes necessary, and Otto Adler, likewise insisted on such preliminaries of psychic and physical courtship, observing that the man who is gifted with insight and skill in these matters possesses a charm which will draw sparks of sensibility from the coldest feminine heart. The advice of the physician is at one in this matter with the maxims of the erotic artist and with the needs of the loving woman, for in making love there must be no haste, wrote Ovid. And Pontanus, the Latin poet of Renaissance Italy, whom we may well prefer as an erotic artist to Ovid, wrote "dulcis Veneris manus ministra est."

It not seldom happens, remarked O. Adler, that the insensibility of the wife must be treated—in the husband. And Guyot, bringing forward the same point, writes: "If by a delay of tender study the husband has understood his young bride, if he is able to realize for her the ineffable happiness and dreams of youth, he will be beloved forever; he will be her master and sovereign lord. If he has failed to understand her he will fatigue and exhaust himself in vain efforts, and finally class her among the indifferent and cold women. She will be his wife by duty, the mother of his children. He will take

his pleasure elsewhere. In such a case a man resembles a bad musician who changes his violin in the hope that a new instrument will bring the melody he is unable to play."

The fact that there is thus an art in love, and that sexual intercourse is not a mere physical act to be executed by force of muscles, may help to explain why it is that in so many parts of the world defloration is not immediately effected on marriage. No doubt religious or magic reasons may also intervene here, but, as so often happens, they harmonize with the biological process. This is the case even among uncivilized peoples who marry early. The need for delay and considerate skill is far greater when, as among ourselves, a woman's marriage is delayed long past the establishment of puberty to a period when it is more difficult to break down the psychic and perhaps even physical barriers of personality.

It has to be added that the art of love in the act of courtship is not confined to the preliminaries to the single act of coitus. In a sense the life of love is a continuous courtship with a constant progression. The establishment of physical intercourse is but the beginning of it. This is especially true of women. "The consummation of love," says Senancour, "which is often the end of love with man is only the beginning of love with woman, a test of trust, a gage of future pleasure, a sort of engagement for an intimacy to come." "A woman's soul and body," says Robert Michels, "are not given at one stroke at a given moment; but only slowly, little by little, through many stages, are both delivered to the beloved. Instead of abandoning the young woman to the bridegroom on the wedding night, as an entrapped mouse is flung to the cat to be devoured, it would be better to let the young bridal couple live side by side, like two friends and comrades, until they gradually learn how to develop and use their sexual consciousness." The conventional wedding is out of place as a preliminary to the consummation of marriage, if only on the ground that it is impossible to say at what stage in the endless process of courtship it ought to take place.

A woman, unlike a man, is prepared by Nature to play a skilful part in the art of love. The man's part in courtship, which is that of the male throughout the zoological series, may be difficult and hazardous, but it is in a straight line, fairly simple and direct. The woman's part, having to follow at the same moment two quite different impulses, is necessarily always in a zigzag or a curve. That is to say that at every erotic moment her action is the resultant of the combined force of her conscious or unconscious desire and her modesty. She must sail through a tortuous channel with Scylla on the one side and Charybdis on the other, and to avoid either danger too anxiously may mean risking shipwreck on the other side. She must be impenetrable to all the world, but it must be an inpenetrability not too obscure for

the divination of the right man. Her speech must be honest, but yet on no account tell everything; her actions must be the outcome of her impulses, and on that very account be capable of two interpretations. It is only in the last resort of complete intimacy that she can become the perfect woman.

> " Whose speech Truth knows not from her thought,
> Nor Love her body from her soul."

For many a woman the conditions for that final erotic avatar—" that splendid shamelessness which," as Rafford Pyke says, " is the finest thing in perfect love "—never present themselves at all. She is compelled to be to the end of her erotic life, what she must always be at the beginning, a complex and duplex personality, naturally artful. Therewith she is better prepared than man to play her part in the art of love.

The man's part in the art of love is, however, by no means easy. That is not always realized by the women who complain of his lack of skill in playing it. Although a man has not to cultivate the same natural duplicity as a woman, it is necessary that he should possess a considerable power of divination. He is not well prepared for that, because the traditional masculine virtue is force rather than insight. The male's work in the world, we are told, is domination, and it is by such domination that the female is attracted. There is an element of truth in that doctrine, an element of truth which may well lead astray the man who too exclusively relies upon it in the art of love. Violence is bad in every art, and in the erotic art the female desires to be won to love and not to be ordered to love. That is fundamental. We sometimes see the matter so stated as if the objection to force and domination in love constituted some quite new and revolutionary demand of the " modern woman." That is, it need scarcely be said, the result of ignorance. The art of love, being an art that Nature makes, is the same now as in essentials it has always been, and it was well established before woman came into existence. That it has not always been skilfully played is another matter. And, so far as the man is concerned, it is this very tradition of masculine predominance which has contributed to the difficulty of playing it skilfully. The woman admires the male's force; she even wishes herself to be forced to the things that she altogether desires; and yet she revolts from any exertion of force outside that narrow circle, either before the boundary of it is reached or after the boundary is passed. Thus the man's position is really more difficult than the women who complain of his awkwardness in love are always ready to admit. He must cultivate force, not only in the world but even for display in the erotic field; he must be able to divine the moments when, in love, force is no longer force because his own will is his partner's will; he must,

at the same time, hold himself in complete restraint lest he should fall into the fatal error of yielding to his own impulse of domination; and all this at the very moment when his emotions are least under control. We need scarcely be surprised that of the myriads who embark on the sea of love, so few women, so very few men, come safely into port.

It may still seem to some that in dwelling on the laws that guide the erotic life, if that life is to be healthy and complete, we have wandered away from the consideration of the sexual instinct in its relationship to society. It may therefore be desirable to return to first principles and to point out that we are still clinging to the fundamental facts of the personal and social life. Marriage, as we have seen reason to believe, is a great social institution; procreation, which is, on the public side, its supreme function, is a great social end. But marriage and procreation are both based on the erotic life. If the erotic life is not sound, then marriage is broken up, practically if not always formally, and the process of procreation is carried out under unfavourable conditions or not at all.

This social and personal importance of the erotic life, though, under the influence of a false morality and an equally false modesty, it has sometimes been allowed to fall into the background in artificial phases of civilization, has always been clearly realized by those peoples who have vitally grasped the relationships of life. Among most uncivilized races there appear to be few or no "sexually frigid" women. It is little to the credit of our own "civilization" that it should be possible for physicians to-day to assert, even with the faintest plausibility, that there are some 25 per cent. of women who may thus be described.

It is true we have to be clear as to what we mean by "sexual frigidity," and the estimates as to its frequency among women vary widely. Rohleder in an elaborate study of dyspareunia, or defective satisfaction in the sex-act in women, estimated it as on the average 5 per cent., or possibly as high as 10 per cent. in Germany. But Hamilton, more recently in New York, carefully recording the experiences of 100 married women of good educational and social status, only found one who could be really considered a case of actual frigidity in the sense of complete absence alike of sex desire and of sex-feeling in the act. But the number of women among the general population in modern civilized countries who are practically though not essentially frigid is undoubtedly large, and the authorities who deal with the subject ascribe this apparent frigidity as due in the great majority of cases to the behaviour of the male partner who reserves to himself the indulgence of sex feeling.[1]

The whole sexual structure of the world is built up on the general

[1] There is an elaborate work by Stekel on the whole subject of *Frigidity in Woman*.

fact that the intimate contact of the male and female who have chosen each other is mutually pleasurable. Below this general fact is the more specific fact that in the normal accomplishment of the act of sexual consummation the two partners experience the acute gratification of simultaneous orgasm. Herein, it has been said, lies the secret of love. It is the basis of completely fulfilled love, the condition of the healthy exercise of the sexual functions, and, in many cases, it has been thought, the condition also of fertilization.

Even savages in a low degree of culture are sometimes patient and considerate in evoking and waiting for the signs of sexual desire in their females. In Catholic days theological influence worked wholesomely in the same direction, although the theologians were so keen to detect the mortal sin of lust. It is true that the Catholic insistence on the desirability of simultaneous orgasm was largely due to the mistaken notion that to secure conception it was necessary that there should be " insemination " on the part of the wife as well as of the husband, but that was not the sole source of the theological view. Thus Zacchia discusses whether a man ought to continue with his wife until she has the orgasm and feels satisfied, and he decides that that is the husband's duty ; otherwise the wife falls into danger either of experiencing the orgasm during sleep, or, more probably, by self-excitation, " for many women, when their desires have not been satisfied by coitus, place one thigh on the other, pressing and rubbing them together until the orgasm occurs, in the belief that if they abstain from using the hands they have committed no sin." Some theologians, he adds, favour that belief, notably Hurtado de Mendoza and Sanchez, and he further quotes the opinion of the latter that women who have not been satisfied in coitus are liable to become hysterical or melancholic. Nowadays physicians have confirmed the belief of Sanchez.

It is frequently stated that the evil of incomplete gratification and absence of orgasm in women is chiefly due to male withdrawal, that is to say *coitus interruptus*, in which the penis is hastily withdrawn as soon as involuntary ejaculation is impending ; and it is sometimes said that the same widely prevalent practice is also productive of slight or serious results in the male. It is undoubtedly true that *coitus interruptus*, since it involves sudden withdrawal on the part of the man without reference to the stage of sexual excitation which his partner may have reached, cannot fail to produce frequently an injurious nervous effect on the woman, though the injurious effect on the man, who obtains ejaculation, is little or none. But the practice is so widespread that it cannot be regarded as necessarily involving this evil result. Dr. Drysdale, who was at the time the chief Neo-Malthusian advocate and propagandist, when privately asked by a medical friend as to the chief popular method, replied at

once : "They withdraw." Blumreich is justified in his statement that "interrupted coitus is injurious to the genital system of those women only who are disturbed in their sensation of delight by this form of cohabitation, in whom the orgasm is not produced, and who continue for hours subsequently to be tormented by feelings of an unsatisfied desire." Equally injurious effects follow also in normal coitus when the man's orgasm occurs too soon. "These phenomena, therefore," he concludes, "are not characteristic of interrupted coitus." Kisch, likewise, stated that the question of the evil results of *coitus interruptus* in women is simply a question whether or not they receive sexual satisfaction. This is clearly the reasonable view to take concerning what is the simplest, the most widespread, and the most ancient of the methods of preventing conception. In the Book of Genesis we find it practised by Onan, and to come down to modern times, in the sixteenth century it seems to have been familiar to French ladies, who, according to Brantôme, enjoined it on their lovers.

It is not unusual for ill-informed writers to confuse *coitus interruptus* with *coitus reservatus*. But the two methods are different in nature and entirely different in effect. The former, with the qualification already noted, is generally regarded as liable to be harmful, at all events to the female partner. The latter, by all who are well informed on the subject, is found to be satisfactory, and especially for the female partner. This method, in which intercourse is maintained even for very long periods—during which the woman may have orgasm several times while the man succeeds in holding back orgasm—so far from being injurious to the woman, is probably the form of coitus which gives her the maximum of gratification and relief. For most men, however, it seems probable that this self-control over the processes leading to the involuntary act of detumescence is difficult to acquire, while in weak, nervous and erethic persons it is impossible. It is, however, a desirable condition for completely adequate coitus, and in the East this is fully recognized, and the aptitude carefully cultivated. Thus W. D. Sutherland states that the Hindu smokes and talks during intercourse in order to delay orgasm, and sometimes applies an opium paste to the glans of the penis for the same purpose. Some authorities have, indeed, stated that the prolongation of the act of coitus is injurious in its effect on the male. R. W. Taylor thought that it tends to cause atonic impotence, and Löwenfeld that the swift and unimpeded culmination of the sexual act is necessary in order to preserve the vigour of the reflex reactions. This is probably true of extreme and often repeated cases of indefinite prolongation of pronounced erection without detumescence, but it is not true within fairly wide limits in the case of healthy persons. Prolonged *coitus reservatus* was a practice of the complex marriage

system of the Oneida community, and I was assured by the late Noyes Miller, who had spent the greater part of his life in the community, that the practice had no sort of evil result. *Coitus reservatus* was erected into a principle in the Oneida community. Every man in the community was theoretically the husband of every woman, but every man was not free to have children with every woman. Sexual initiation took place soon after puberty in the case of boys, some years later in the case of girls, by a much older person of the opposite sex. In intercourse the male inserted his penis into the vagina and retained it there for even an hour without emission, though orgasm took place in the woman. There was usually no emission in the case of the man, even after withdrawal, and he felt no need of emission. The social feeling of the community was a force on the side of this practice, the careless, unskilful men being avoided by women, while the general romantic sentiment of affection for all the women in the community was also a force. Masturbation was unknown, and no irregular relations took place with persons outside the community. The practice was maintained for thirty years, and was finally abandoned, not on its demerits, but in deference to the opinions of the outside world. Mr. Miller admitted that the practice became more difficult in ordinary marriage, which favours a more mechanical habit of intercourse. It is described in a pamphlet entitled *Male Continence* (the name given to *coitus reservatus* in the community) written in 1872 by the founder, John Humphrey Noyes. The practice is based, he says, on the fact that sexual intercourse consists of two acts, a social and a propagative, and that if propagation is to be scientific there must be no confusion of these two acts, and procreation must never be involuntary. It was in 1844, he states, that this idea occurred to him as a result of a resolve to abstain from sexual intercourse in consequence of his wife's delicate health and inability to bear healthy children, and in his own case he found the practice "a great deliverance. It made a happy household." He points out that the chief members of the Oneida community "belonged to the most respectable families in Vermont, had been educated in the best schools of New England morality and refinement, and were, by the ordinary standards, irreproachable in their conduct so far as sexual matters are concerned, till they deliberately commenced, in 1846, the experiment of a new state of society, on principles which they had been long maturing and were prepared to defend before the world." In relation to male continence, therefore, Noyes thought the community might fairly be considered "the Committee of Providence to test its value in actual life." He states that a careful medical comparison of the statistics of the community had shown that the rate of nervous disease in the community was considerably below the average outside, and that only two cases of nervous disorder had occurred which

could be traced with any probability to a misuse of male continence. This has been confirmed by Van de Warker, who studied forty-two women of the community without finding any undue prevalence of reproductive diseases, nor could he find any diseased condition attributable to the sexual habits of the community.

John Humphrey Noyes, though he founded perhaps the only small community on a more or less communistic basis, which has ever been in all respects, even financially, successful, was in his own time often belittled, regarded as an object for amusement or reprobation, or at least as a fanatic. It is only in recent years that his pioneering importance has been recognized, whether for his skill in the realization of social ideals or his insight and energy in making the first attempts at practical eugenics. It has now (1937) become possible for a serious critic to describe him as one of the most remarkable characters America has produced. It is only now indeed that his life has been fully and adequately written by Robert Allerton Parker, *A Yankee Saint* (New York, 1935). In this admirable biography Noyes appears no longer as a fanatic, but as a man who, though religiously inspired by the Bible, always interpreted it in his own free personal way and with a singularly enlightened and receptive attitude to the social and scientific problems of the modern world, even before that world had itself yet clearly recognized them. A still more intimate study of the community is presented in another recent book, Pierrepont Noyes's *My Father's House : An Oneida Boyhood* (1937), for the author is the son of the founder's old age and brought up in the community ; he is a witness to the fine heredity and the good environmental aptitudes of his origin since he has himself had an active and distinguished career in the world.

*Coitus reservatus* is the central motive in a book which once attracted much attention, Dr. Alice B. Stockham's *Karezza* (revised edition, Chicago, 1896). I once had a visit from Dr. Stockham, a simple and sensible person, but her book was described to me by Edward Carpenter, not altogether incorrectly, as, though containing much that is beautiful, " a farrago of absurdity." Another American writer, J. William Lloyd, non-medical but known in literature, privately printed in 1920, and without putting his name to it, a little book entitled *The Karezza Method or Magnetation : The Art of Connubial Love.* This book, while rhapsodically poetic in its exaltation of a sex-religion, and its eulogy of Karezza as " the art of love in its perfect flowers, its fulfilment of the ideal dream," is more sane and practical than Dr. Stockham's book. There is no doubt, however, that the erotic method in question, perhaps by virtue of its advantages, tends to be associated with extravagant notions among persons so predisposed. A recent medical practitioner, again American (and described to me by one who knows him as both a

skilful physician and a fine-hearted gentleman), has written, without publishing or widely circulating, a little essay entitled " In Search of the Fourth Dimension of the Sixth or Sexual Sense," and based on Karezza. What he calls the First dimension is the physically erotic, the Second the sentimental, the Third the procreative. What he calls the Fourth uses at the outset the First, avoids the Second and Third and attains an impersonal and spiritual exaltation that transcends all low desires, confers a realization of beauty and goodness and benevolence, and is capable of transformation into all the finest ends of life. This conception has, however, been found extreme and not altogether coherent even by enthusiastic advocates of *coitus reservatus*. But so realistic and practical an exponent of the art of love as the author of *Sane Sex Life and Sane Sex Living* informed me that *coitus reservatus* was his own personally preferred method. " We by no means limit ourselves to that method," he added, " but it has, through many blissful years, served us most perfectly as a means of cultivating, maintaining, amplifying the Art of Love between us, and we count a large part of our present well-being, physically, mentally, and spiritually, to the exercise of this manner of sex expression."

Noyes believed that " male continence " had never previously been a definitely recognized practice based on theory, though there might have been occasional approximation to it. This is probably true if the coitus is *reservatus* in the full sense, with complete absence of emission. Prolonged coitus, however, permitting the woman to have orgasm more than once, while the man has none, has long been recognized. Thus in the seventeenth century Zacchia discussed whether such a practice is legitimate. In modern times it is occasionally practised, without any theory, and is always appreciated by the woman, while it appears to have no bad effect on the man. Even a sexual athlete like Casanova stated that he was in the habit of practising this method. In such a case it will happen that the act of coitus may last for an hour and a quarter or even longer, the maximum of the woman's pleasure not being reached until three-quarters of an hour have passed ; during this period the woman will experience orgasm some four or five times, the man only at the end. It may occasionally happen that a little later the woman again experiences desire, and intercourse begins afresh in the same way. But after that she is satisfied, and there is no recurrence of desire. Dickinson and Bryant, in their standard work on *Control of Conception*, while admitting that *coitus reservatus* has been " a cause of scoffing," believe that it " may some day develop a wider appeal as a refinement of method." It is, however, desirable to point out that while *coitus reservatus* has a proper place in the art of love, it is not always accepted as a satisfactory method of birth control, on account of the anxiety, especially on the part of the woman partner, lest it should not be maintained.

For contraceptive purposes, therefore, it may be better to combine it with some other preventative.

It may be desirable at this point to refer to variations in the method of effecting coitus in relationship to the art of love and the attainment of adequate and satisfying detumescence.

The primary and essential characteristic of the specifically human methods of coitus is the fact that it takes place face to face. The fact that in what is usually considered the typically normal method of coitus the woman lies supine and the man above her is secondary.[1] Psychically, this front-to-front attitude represents a great advance over the quadrupedal method. The two partners reveal to each other the most important, the most beautiful, the most expressive sides of themselves, and thus multiply the mutual pleasure and harmony of the intimate act of union. Moreover, this face-to-face attitude possesses a great significance, in the fact that it is the outward sign that the human couple has outgrown the animal sexual attitude as of a hunter seizing his prey in the act of flight, and content to enjoy it in that attitude, from behind. The human male may be said to retain the same attitude, but the female has turned round; she has faced her partner and approached him, and so symbolizes her deliberate consent to the act of union.

The human variations in the exercise of coitus, both individual and national, are, however, extremely numerous. "To be quite frank," says Fürbringer, "I can hardly think of any combination which does not figure among my case-notes as having been practised by my patients." We must not conclude that such variations are due to vicious training. That is far from being the case. They often occur naturally and spontaneously. Freud has properly pointed out (in the second series of his *Beiträge zur Neurosenlehre*) that we must not be too shocked even when the idea of *fellatio* spontaneously presents itself to a woman, for that idea has a harmless origin in the resemblance between the penis and the nipple. Similarly, it may be added, the corresponding desire for *cunnilinctus*, which seems to be much more often latently present in women than is the desire for its performance in men, has a natural analogy in the pleasure of suckling, a pleasure which is itself indeed often erotically tinged.

Every variation in this matter, remarks Remy de Gourmont, theologically partakes of the sin of luxury, and some of the theologians have indeed considered any position in coitus but that which is usually called normal in Europe as a mortal sin. Other theologians, however,

[1] This may not have been the earliest human attitude in coitus. The earliest representation of coitus known was found by Lalanne in a relief in the Laussel Cave of Dordogne, which is of the Solutré period. The partners face each other but the woman sits in a kind of squatting position on the man (see reproduction of the relief in, for instance, *Die Umschau* of February 19th, 1921). This posture is also represented on Greek vases and is still sometimes adopted.

regarded such variations as only venial sins, provided ejaculation took place in the vagina. Aquinas took a serious view of the deviations from normal intercourse; Sanchez was more indulgent, especially in view of his doctrine, derived from the Greek and Arabic natural philosophers, that the womb can attract the sperm, so that the natural end may be attained even in unusual positions.

Whatever difference of opinion there may have been among ancient theologians, it is well recognized by modern physicians that variations from the ordinary method of coitus are desirable in special cases. Thus Kisch pointed out that in some cases it is only possible for the woman to experience sexual excitement when coitus takes place in the lateral position, or in *a posteriori* position, or when the usual position is reversed; and Kisch recommends several variations of position for coitus. Otto Adler pointed out the value of the same positions in some cases, and remarks that such variations often call forth latent sexual feelings as by a charm. Such cases are indeed by no means infrequent, the advantage of the unusual position being due either to physical or psychic causes, and the discovery of the right variation is sometimes found in a merely playful attempt. It has occasionally happened, also, that when intercourse has habitually taken place in an abnormal position, no satisfaction is experienced by the woman until the normal position is adopted. The only variation of coitus which meets with unqualified disapproval is that in the erect posture.

Lucretius long ago specially recommended the quadrupedal variation of coitus, and the theologians seem to have been less unfavourably disposed to this position, though the old Penitentials were inclined to treat it severely, the Penitential of Angers prescribing forty days' penance, and Egbert's three years, if practised habitually. There are reasons why in many cases this position should be desirable, more especially from the point of view of women, who indeed not infrequently prefer it. It must be always remembered, as has already been pointed out, that in the progress from anthropoid to man it is the female, not the male, whose method of coitus has been revolutionized. While, however, the obverse human position represents a psychic advance, there has never been a complete physical readjustment of the female organs to the obverse method. More especially, in Adler's opinion, the position of the clitoris is such that, as a rule, it is more easily excited by coitus from behind than from in front. A more recent writer, Klotz, in his book, *Der Mensch ein Vierfüssler*, even took the too extreme position that the quadrupedal method of coitus, being the only method that insures due contact with the clitoris, is the natural human method. It must, however, be admitted that the posterior mode of coitus is not only a widespread, but an important variation, in either of its two most important forms: the

Pompeiian method, in which the woman bends forwards and the man approaches behind, or the method described by Boccaccio, in which the man is supine and the woman astride.

The most usual variation is the inverse normal position in which the man is supine, and the woman adapts herself to this position, which permits of several modifications obviously advantageous, especially when the man is much larger than his partner. The Christian as well as the Mahommedan theologians appear, indeed, to have been generally opposed to this superior position of the female, apparently, it would seem, because they regarded the literal subjection of the male which it involves as symbolic of a moral subjection. The testimony of many people to-day, however, is decidedly in favour of this position, more especially as regards the woman, since it enables her to obtain a better adjustment and greater control of the process, and so frequently to secure sexual satisfaction which she may find difficult or impossible in the normal position.

The disgrace which has overtaken the sexual act, and rendered it a deed of darkness, is doubtless largely responsible for the fact that the chief time for its consummation among modern civilized peoples is the darkness of the early night in stuffy bedrooms when the fatigue of the day's labours is struggling with the artificial stimulation produced by heavy meals and alcoholic drinks. This habit is partly responsible for the indifference or even disgust with which women sometimes view coitus.

Many more primitive peoples are wiser, though it must be remembered that the association of the sexual act with darkness is much older than Christianity, and connected with early religious notions. The New Guinea Papuans of Astrolabe Bay, according to Vahness, always have sexual intercourse in the open air. The hard-working women of the Gebvuka and Buru Islands, again, are too tired for coitus at night ; it is carried out in the day-time under the trees, and the Serang Islanders also have coitus in the woods. Among some Papaun tribes of New Guinea coitus must not be carried on indoors ; early morning is considered the correct time, states Moskowski, so that newly-married couples live mostly in the bush.

It is obviously impracticable to follow these examples in modern cities, even if vocation and climate permitted. It is also agreed that sexual intercourse should be followed by repose. There seems to be little doubt, however, that the early morning and the daylight are a more favourable time than the early night. Conception should take place in the light, said Michelet ; sexual intercourse in the darkness of night is an act committed with a mere female animal ; in the daytime it is union with a loving and beloved individual person.

This has been widely recognized. The Greeks, as we gather from Aristophanes, regarded sunrise as the appropriate time for coitus.

The South Slavs also say that dawn is the time for coitus. Many modern authorities have urged the advantages of early morning coitus. Morning, said Roubaud, is the time for coitus, and even if desire is greater in the evening, pleasure is greater in the morning. Osiander also advised early morning coitus, and Venette, in an earlier century, discussing " at what hour a man should amourously embrace his wife," while thinking it is best to follow inclination, remarked that " a beautiful woman looks better by sunlight than by candlelight." A few authorities, like Burdach, have been content to accept the custom of night coitus, and Busch was inclined to think the darkness of night the most " natural " time.

But to the more adventurous modern writers on the art of love, from Milton onwards, coitus in the open air has often been recommended with approval. Adam and Eve, in Book IV of *Paradise Lost*, are described, in a fine passage, as having thus initiated sexual intercourse. The writer who adopted the pseudonym of " Hamill " called attention to this in his book *The Truth We Owe to Youth*. So did Edward Carpenter, also with approval, in *Love's Coming of Age*. The late Dr. W. F. Robie, who often followed an independent course of advice, in his *Rational Sex Ethics* (1916) stated that, even if not in the open air, when possible " intercourse by daylight is very desirable ; in the early morning, with a short sleep after it, it is ideal." He was opposed to intercourse at night, when one or both partners might be physically exhausted, except as a sedative after psychic excitement. This question of physical exhaustion is, indeed, important, especially for men with a tendency to defective potency who need the fresh energy which comes after a night's rest.[1]

To some, indeed, the exercise of sexual intercourse in the sunlight and the open air seems so important that they are inclined to elevate it to the rank of a religious ritual. I quote from a communication on this point received from Australia from the late W. J. Chidley, a remarkable and eccentric man, with some inspired ideas, but who proved so troublesome to the police by the public advocacy of his views, that they decided to regard him as insane.[2] " This shameful thing that must not be spoken of or done (except in the dark) will some day, I believe, become the one religious ceremony of the human race, in the spring. (Oh, what springs !) People will have become

[1] This is worth noting since defective potency is extremely common under the social conditions of life to-day, due to complexly interwoven physical and psychological causes, and, in spite of medical advances, its treatment is still in an elementary stage. A good recent (1935) discussion is Palazzoli's *L'Impuissance Sexuelle chez l'Homme*.

[2] Chidley wrote a detailed autobiography which is a valuable psychological and sociological document. He placed it in my care for publication after his death when possible. But, as it is too plain-spoken for publication in my day, I have presented it to the Mitchell Library of Sydney, New South Wales.

very sane, well-bred, aristocratic (all of them aristocrats), and on the whole opposed to rites and superstitions, for they will have a perfect knowledge of the past. The coition of lovers in the springtime will be the one religious ceremony they will allow themselves. I have a vision sometimes of the holy scene, but I am afraid it is too beautiful to describe. ' The intercourse of the sexes, I have dreamed, is ineffably beautiful, too fair to be remembered,' wrote the chaste Thoreau. Verily human beauty, joy, and love will reach their divinest height during those inaugural days of springtide coupling. When the world is one Paradise, the consummation of the lovers, the youngest and most beautiful, will take place in certain sacred valleys in sight of thousands assembled to witness it. For days it will take place in these valleys where the sun will rise on a dream of passionate voices, of clinging human forms, of flowers and waters, and the purple and gold of the sunrise are reflected on hills illuminated with pansies. [I know not if the writer recalled the " Enamelled pansies used at nuptials still " of George Chapman, who may have been following Claudian's " violas . . . collectas Veneris prato "], and repeated on golden human flesh and human hair. In these sacred valleys the subtle perfume of the pansies will mingle with the divine fragrance of healthy naked young women and men in the spring coupling. You and I shall not see that, but we may help to make it possible." This rhapsody (an unconscious repetition of Saint-Lambert's at Mlle. Quinault's table in the eighteenth century) serves to illustrate the revolt which tends to take place against the unnatural and artificial degradation of the sexual act.

In some parts of the world it has seemed perfectly natural and reasonable that so great and significant an act as that of coitus should be consecrated to the divinity, and hence arose the custom of prayer before sexual intercourse. Thus Zoroaster ordained that a married couple should pray before coitus, and after the act they should say together : " O, Sapondomad, I trust this seed to thee, preserve it for me, for it is a man." In the Gorong Archipelago it is customary also for husband and wife to pray together before the sexual act. The civilized man, however, has come to regard his stomach as the most important of his organs, and he utters his conventional grace, if ever, not before love, but only before food. Even the degraded ritual vestiges of the religious recognition of coitus are difficult to find in Europe. We may perhaps detect it among the Spaniards, with their tenacious instinct for ritual, in the solemn etiquette with which, in the seventeenth century, it was customary, according to Madame d'Aulnay, for the King to enter the bedchamber of the Queen : " He has on his slippers, his black mantle over his shoulder, his shield on one arm, a bottle hanging by a cord over the other arm (this bottle is not to drink from, but for a quite opposite purpose, which you will guess). With

all this the King must also have his great sword in one hand and a dark lantern in the other. In this way he must enter, alone, the Queen's chamber" Madame d'Aulnay was at most points a thoroughly unreliable writer, but we may hope that on this occasion her gossip was well founded.

In discussing the art of love it is necessary to give a primary place to the central fact of coitus, on account of the ignorance that widely prevails concerning it, and the unfortunate prejudices which in their fungous broods flourish in the noisome obscurity around it. The traditions of the Christian Church, which overspread the whole of Europe, and set up for worship a Divine Virgin and her Divine Son, both of whom it elaborately disengaged from personal contact with sexuality, effectually crushed any attempt to find a sacred and avowable ideal in married love.[1] Even the Church's efforts to elevate matrimony were negatived by its own ideals. That influence depresses our civilization even to-day. When Walt Whitman wrote his "Children of Adam" he was giving imperfect expression to conceptions of the religious nature of sexual love which have existed wholesomely and naturally in all parts of the world, but had not yet penetrated the darkness of Christendom where they still seemed strange and new, if not terrible. And the refusal to recognize the dignity of sex had involved the placing of a pall of blackness and disrepute on the supreme sexual act itself. It was shut out from the sunshine and excluded from the sphere of worship.

The sexual act is important from the point of view of erotic art, not only from the ignorance and prejudices which surround it, but also because it has a real value even in regard to the psychic side of married life. "These organs," according to the oft-quoted saying of the old French physician, Ambrose Paré, "make peace in the household." And Robert Burns in a plain-spoken and therefore seldom quoted letter exclaims: "Oh, what a peacemaker. . . . the Aaron's rod, the Jacob's staff, the prophet Elisha's pot of oil, the Ahasuerus sceptre," etc. How this comes about we see illustrated from time to time in Pepys' Diary. At the same time, it is scarcely necessary to say, after all that has gone before, that this ancient source of domestic peace tends to be indefinitely complicated by the infinite variety in

[1] There has sometimes been dispute as to whether medieval Christianity raised or lowered the general estimation of sexual love. C. S. Lewis, in his essay on *The Allegory of Love*, decides that Christianity obviously, in a very general sense, softened or absorbed the more extreme brutalities and flippancies of the ancient world in sexual matters. "But there is no evidence that the quasi-religious tone of medieval love poetry has been transferred from the worship of the Blessed Virgin; it is just as likely—it is even more likely—that the colouring of certain hymns to the Virgin has been borrowed from the love poetry. Nor it is true in any unequivocal sense that the medieval Church encouraged reverence for women at all; while it is a ludicrous error to suppose that she regarded sexual passion, under any conditions or after any possible process of refinement, as a noble emotion."

erotic needs, which become ever more pronounced with the growth of civilization.

The art of love is, indeed, only beginning with the establishment of sexual intercourse. In the adjustment of that relationship all the forces of nature are so strongly engaged that under completely favourable conditions—which indeed very rarely occur in our civilization—the knowledge of the art and a possible skill in its exercise come almost of themselves. The real test of the artist in love is in the skill to carry it beyond the period when the interests of nature, having been really or seemingly secured, begin to slacken. The whole art of love, it has been well said, lies in forever finding something new in the same person. The art of love is even more the art of retaining love than of arousing it. Otherwise it tends to degenerate towards the Shakespearian lust,

> " Past reason hunted, and no sooner had,
> Past reason hated,"

though it must be remembered that even from the most strictly natural point of view the transitions of passion are not normally towards repulsion but towards affection.[1]

The young man and woman who are brought into the complete unrestraint of marriage after a prolonged and unnatural separation, during which desire and the satisfactions of desire have been artificially disconnected, are certainly not under the best conditions for learning the art of love. They are tempted by reckless and promiscuous indulgence in the intimacies of marriage to fling carelessly aside all the reasons that make that art worth learning. " There are married people," as Ellen Key remarked, " who might have loved each other all their lives if they had not been compelled, every day and all the year, to direct their habits, wills, and inclinations towards each other."

All the tendencies of our civilized life are, in personal matters, though not in impersonal matters, towards individualism ; they involve the specialization, and they ensure the sacredness, of personal habits and even peculiarities. This individualism cannot be broken down suddenly at the arbitrary dictation of a tradition, or even by the force of passion from which the restraints have been removed. Out of deference to the conventions and prejudices of their friends, or out of the reckless abandonment of young love, or merely out of a fear of hurting each other's feelings, young couples have often plunged prematurely into an unbroken intimacy which is even more disastrous to the permanency of marriage than the failure ever to reach a complete intimacy at all. That is one of the chief reasons why most writers on

[1] Thus, among the Eskimo, who practise temporary wife-exchange, Rasmussen states that " a man generally discovers that his own wife is, in spite of all, the best."

the moral hygiene of marriage nowadays recommend separate beds for the married couple, if possible separate bedrooms, and even sometimes, with Ellen Key, see no objection to their living in separate houses. Certainly the happiest marriages have often involved the closest and most unbroken intimacy, in persons peculiarly fitted for such intimacy. It is far from true that, as Bloch affirmed, familiarity is fatal to love. It is deadly to a love that has no roots, but it is the nourishment of the deeply-rooted love. Yet it remains true that absence is needed to maintain the keen freshness and fine idealism of love. "Absence," as Landor said, "is the invisible and incorporeal mother of ideal beauty." The married lovers who are only able to meet for comparatively brief periods between long absences have often experienced in these meetings a life-long succession of honeymoons.

There can be no question that as presence has its risks for love, so also has absence. Absence like presence, in the end, if too prolonged, effaces the memory of love, and absence, further, by the multiplied points of contact with the world which it frequently involves, introduces the problem of jealousy, although, it must be added, it is difficult indeed to secure a degree of association which excludes jealousy or even the opportunities for motives of jealousy. The problem of jealousy is so fundamental in the art of love that it is necessary at this point to devote to it a brief discussion.

Jealousy is based on fundamental instincts which are visible at the beginning of animal life. Descartes defined jealousy as "a kind of fear related to a desire to preserve a possession." Every impulse of acquisition in the animal world is stimulated into greater activity by the presence of a rival who may snatch beforehand the coveted object. This seems to be a fundamental fact in the animal world ; it has been a life-conserving tendency, for, it has been said, an animal that stood aside while its fellows were gorging themselves with food and experienced nothing but pure satisfaction in the spectacle, would speedily perish. But in this fact we have the natural basis of jealousy.

It is in reference to food that this impulse appears first and most conspicuously among animals. It is a well-known fact that association with the other animals induces an animal to eat much more than when kept by himself. He ceases to eat from hunger but eats, as it has been put, in order to preserve his food from rivals in the only strong box he knows. The same feeling is transferred among animals to the field of sex. And further in the relations of dogs and other domesticated animals to their masters the emotion of jealousy is often very keenly marked.

Jealousy is an emotion which is at its maximum among animals, among savages,[1] among children, in the senile, in the degenerate, and

[1] Jealousy among lower races may be disguised or modified by tribal customs. Thus Rasmussen says in reference to the Eskimo custom of wife-exchange:

very specially in chronic alcoholics. It is worthy of note that the supreme artists and masters of the human heart who have most consummately represented the tragedy of jealousy clearly recognized that it is either atavistic or pathological; Shakespeare made his Othello a barbarian, and Tolstoy made the Pozdnischeff of his *Kreutzer Sonata* a lunatic. It is an anti-social emotion, though it has been maintained by some that it has been the cause of chastity and fidelity. Gesell, for instance, while admitting its anti-social character and accumulating quotations in evidence of the torture and disaster it occasions, seems to think that it still ought to be encouraged in order to foster sexual virtues. Very decided opinions have been expressed in the opposite sense. Jealousy, like other shadows, says Ellen Key, belongs only to the dawn and the setting of love, and a man should feel that it is a miracle, and not his right, if the sun stands still at the zenith.

Even therefore if jealousy has been a beneficial influence at the beginning of civilization,[1] as well as among animals,—as may probably be admitted, though on the whole it seems rather to be the by-product of a beneficial influence than such an influence itself,—it is still by no means clear that it therefore becomes a desirable emotion in more advanced stages of civilization. There are many primitive emotions, like anger and fear, which we do not think it desirable to encourage in complex civilized societies but rather seek to restrain and control, and even if we are inclined to attribute an original value to jealousy, it seems to be among these emotions that it ought to be placed.

Eric Gillard, in opposition to those who believe that jealousy "makes the home," declares that, on the contrary, it is the chief force that unmakes the home. "It turns homes that might be sanctuaries of love into hells of discord and hate. Makes the home! One of your married men friends sees a probable seducer in every man who smiles at his wife; another is jealous of his wife's women acquaintances; a third is wounded because his wife shows so much attention to the children. Some of the women you know display jealousy of every other woman, of their husband's acquaintances, and some, of his very dog. You must be completely monopolized or you do not thoroughly love. You must admire no one but the

"A man once told me that he only beat his wife when she would not receive other men. She would have nothing to do with anyone but him—and that was her only failing!" Rasmussen elsewhere shows that the Eskimo are capable of extreme jealousy. Among the polygynous Todas, though they are by no means promiscuous, Rivers states, he found little or no jealousy, and when asked if it occurred they regarded the idea as ridiculous. Rivers adds that jealous persons seem to be found sometimes, but they are consigned to the Toda Purgatory.

[1] Hartland in his *Primitive Paternity* argued that jealousy is not a primitive trait, but Malinowski in *The Family among the Australian Aborigenes* takes an opposite view.

person with whom you have immured yourself for life. Old friendships must be dissolved, new friendships must not be formed, for fear of invoking the beautiful emotion that 'makes the home.'"

Even if jealousy in matters of sex could be admitted to be an emotion working on the side of civilized progress, it must still be pointed out that it merely acts externally; it can have little or no real influence; the jealous person seldom makes himself more lovable by his jealousy and frequently much less lovable. The main effect of his jealousy is to increase, and not seldom to excite, the causes for jealousy, and at the same time to encourage hypocrisy.

All the circumstances, accompaniments, and results of domestic jealousy in their completely typical form, are illustrated by a serious episode in the history of the Pepys household, and have been fully and faithfully set down by the great diarist. The offence—an embrace of his wife's lady-help, as she might now be termed—was a slight one, but, as Pepys himself admits, quite inexcusable. He is in his thirty-sixth year, and the story begins on the 25th of October, 1668, and during the following weeks is narrated in all its details. It is evident when we survey the whole of this perhaps typical episode, that neither husband nor wife was in the slightest degree prepared for the commonplace position into which they were thrown; that each of them appears in a painful, undignified, and humiliating light; that as a result of it the husband acquires almost a genuine and strong affection for the girl who is the cause of the quarrel; and finally that, even though he is compelled, for the time at all events, to yield to his wife, he remains at the end exactly what he was at the beginning. Nor had husband or wife the slightest wish to leave each other; the bond of marriage remained firm, but it had been degraded by insincerity on one side and the jealous endeavour on the other to secure fidelity by compulsion.

Apart altogether, however, from the question of its effectiveness, or even of the misery that it causes to all concerned, it is clear that jealousy is incompatible with all the tendencies of civilization. We have seen that a certain degree of variation is involved in the sexual relationship, as in all other relationships, and unless we are to continue to perpetuate many evils and injustices, that fact has to be faced and recognized. We have also seen that any line of advance involves a constant increase in moral responsibility and self-government, and that, in its turn, implies not only a high degree of sincerity but also the recognition that no person has any right, or indeed any power, to control the emotions and action of another person. If our sun of love stands still at midday, according to Ellen Key's phrase, that is a miracle to be greeted with awe and gratitude, and by no means a right to be demanded. The claim of jealousy falls with the claim of conjugal rights.

It is quite possible, Bloch remarks, to love more than one person at the same time, with nearly equal tenderness, and to be honestly able to assure each of the passion felt for her or him. Bloch adds that the vast psychic differentiation involved by modern civilization increases the possibility of this double love, for it is difficult for anyone to find his complement in a single person, and that this applies to women as well as to men. As Georg Hirth likewise pointed out, it is important to remember that women, as well as men, can love two persons at the same time. Men flatter themselves, he remarks, with the prejudice that the female heart, or rather brain, can only hold one man at a time, and that if there is a second man it is by a kind of prostitution. Nearly all erotic writers, poets, and novelists, even physicians and psychologists, belong to this class, he says; they look on a woman as property, and of course two men cannot "possess" a woman. (Regarding novelists, however, the remark may be interpolated that there are many exceptions, and Thomas Hardy, for instance, frequently represents a woman as more or less in love with two men at the same time.) As against the desire to depreciate women's psychic capacity, Hirth maintains that a woman is not necessarily obliged to be untrue to one man because she has conceived a passion for another man. "To-day," Hirth truly declares, "only love and justice can count as honourable motives in marriage. Let there be no lies, no deception; the indispensable foundation of modern marriage is boundless sincerity and friendship, the deepest trust, affectionate devotion, and consideration.[1] Let him who is, nevertheless, overtaken by the outbreak of infidelity console himself with the undoubted fact that of two real lovers the most noble-minded and deep-seeing *friend* will always have the preference."

These wise words cannot be too deeply meditated. The policy of jealousy is only successful—when it is successful—in the hands of the man who counts the external husk of love more valuable than the kernel.

It seems to some that the recognition of variations in sexual relationships, of the tendency of the monogamic to overpass its self-imposed bounds, is at best a sad necessity, and a lamentable fall from a high ideal. That, however, is the reverse of the truth. The great evil of monogamy, and its most seriously weak point, is its tendency to self-concentration at the expense of the outer world. The devil always comes to a man in the shape of his wife and children, said Hinton. The family is a great social influence as an instrument for creating children who will make the future citizens; but in a certain sense the family is an anti-social influence, for it tends to

[1] Already in the eighteenth century, I may comment, Rousseau makes Julie in the *Nouvelle Heloise* (Lettre XXXV) say that sincerity is the only way to prevent jealousy.

absorb unduly the energy that is needed for the invigoration of society. It is possible, indeed, that that fact led to a modification of the monogamic system in early developing periods of human history, when social expansion and cohesion were the primary necessities. The family too often tends to resemble, as Edward Carpenter said, the secluded collection of grubs sometimes revealed in their narrow home when we casually raise a flat stone in our gardens. Great as are the problems of love, and great as should be our attention to them, it must always be remembered that love is not a little circle that is complete in itself. It is the nature of love to irradiate. Just as family life exists mainly for the social end of breeding the future race, so family love has its social ends in the extension of the sympathy and affection it generates to those outside it, and even in ends that go beyond love altogether.[1]

The question is debated from time to time as to how far it is possible for men and women to have intimate friendships with each other outside the erotic sphere. There can be no doubt whatever that it is possible for a man and a woman to experience for each other a friendship which never intrudes into the sexual sphere. As a rule, however, this only happens under special conditions, and those are generally conditions which exclude the closest and most intimate friendship. If love may be defined as a synthesis of lust and friendship between persons of opposite sex, friendship enters into the possible erotic sphere. Just as sexual emotion tends to merge into friendship, so friendship between persons of opposite sex, if young, healthy, and attractive, tends to involve sexual emotion. The two feelings are too closely allied for an artificial barrier to be permanently placed between them without protest. Men who offer a woman friendship usually find that it is not received with much satisfaction except as the first instalment of a warmer emotion, and women who offer friendship to a man usually find that he responds with an offer of love; very often the "friendship" is from the first simply love or flirtation masquerading under another name. The frontier between erotic love and friendship is vague, and an intimate psychic intercourse that is sternly debarred from ever manifesting itself in a caress, or other physical manifestation of tender intimacy, tends to be constrained, and arouses unspoken and unspeakable thoughts and desires which are fatal to any complete friendship.

Undoubtedly the only perfect "Platonic friendships" are those which have been reached through the portal of a preliminary erotic intimacy. In such a case bad lovers, when they have resolutely

[1] Schrempf points out that Goethe strove to show in *Egmont* that a woman is repelled by the love of a man who knows nothing beyond his love to her, and that it is easy for her to devote herself to the man whose aims lie in the larger world beyond herself. There is profound truth in this view.

traversed the erotic stage, may become exceedingly good friends. A satisfactory friendship is possible between brother and sister because they have been physically intimate in childhood, and erotic curiosities are absent. The most admirable "Platonic friendship" may often be attained by husband and wife in whom sympathy and affection and common interests have outlived passion. In nearly all the most famous friendships of distinguished men and women—as we know in some cases and divine in others—an hour's passion, in Sainte-Beuve's words, has served as the golden key to unlock the most precious and intimate secrets of friendship.

The friendships that have been entered through the erotic portal possess an intimacy and retain a spiritually erotic character which could not be attained on the basis of a normal friendship between persons of the same sex. This is true in a far higher degree of the ultimate relationship, under fortunate circumstances, of husband and wife in the years after passion has become impossible. They have ceased to be passionate lovers but they have not become mere friends and comrades. More especially their relationship takes on elements borrowed from the attitude of child to parent, of parent to child. Everyone from his first years retains something of the child which cannot be revealed to all the world; everyone acquires something of the guardian paternal or maternal spirit. Husband and wife are each child to the other, and are indeed parent and child by turn. And here still the woman retains a certain erotic supremacy, for she is to the last more of a child than it is ever easy for the man to be, and much more essentially a mother than he is a father.

It is on the basis of these elemental human facts that the permanently seductive and inspiring relationships of sex are developed, and not by the emergence of personalities who combine impossibly exalted characteristics. "The task is extremely difficult," says Kisch in his *Sexual Life of Woman*, "but a clever and virtuous modern wife must endeavour to combine in her single personality the sensuous attractiveness of an Aspasia, the chastity of a Lucrece, and the intellectual greatness of a Cornelia."

The demands made of men by women also have been almost too lofty to bear definite formulation at all. "Ninety-nine out of a hundred loving women," says Helene Stöcker, "certainly believe that if a thousand other men have behaved ignobly, and forsaken, ill-used, and deceived the woman they love, the man they love is an exception, marked out from all other men; that is the reason they love him." It may be doubted, however, if the great lovers have ever stood very far above the ordinary level of humanity by their possession of perfection. They have been human, and their art of love has not always excluded the possession of human frailties;

perfection, indeed, even if it could be found, would furnish a bad soil for love to strike deep roots in.

It is only when we realize the highly complex nature of the elements which make up erotic love that we can understand how it is that that love can constitute so tremendous a revelation and exert so profound an influence even in men of the greatest genius and intellect and in the sphere of their most spiritual activity. It is not merely passion, nor any conscious skill in the erotic art,—important as these may be,—that would serve to account for Goethe's relationship to Frau von Stein, or Wagner's to Mathilde Wesendonck, or that of Robert and Elizabeth Browning to each other.

It may now be clear to the reader why it has been necessary in a discussion of the sexual impulse in its relationship to society to deal with the art of love. It is true that there is nothing so intimately private and personal as the erotic affairs of the individual. Yet it is equally true that these affairs lie at the basis of the social life, and furnish the conditions—good or bad as the case may be—of that procreative act which is a supreme concern of the State. It is because the question of love is of private interest that it tends to be submerged in the question of breed. We have to realize, not only that the question of love subserves the question of breed, but also that love has a proper, a necessary, even a socially wholesome claim, to stand by itself and to be regarded for its own worth.

## CHAPTER XII

# THE SCIENCE OF PROCREATION

The Relationship of the Science of Procreation to the Art of Love—Sexua Desire and Sexual Pleasure as Conditions of Conception—Reproduction as Left to Caprice and Lust—The Question of Procreation as a Religious Question—The Creed of Eugenics—Ellen Key and Sir Francis Galton—Our Debt to Posterity—The Problem of Replacing Natural Selection—The Origin and Development of Eugenics—The Acceptance of Eugenical Principles—The Two Channels by which Eugenical Principles become Embodied in Practice—Sexual Responsibility in Women—Compulsory Motherhood and Voluntary Motherhood—Causes of the Degradation of Motherhood—The Control of Conception—Now Practised by the Majority of the Population in Civilized Countries—The Question of "Racial Suicide"—Are Large Families a Stigma of Degeneration?—Procreative Control the Outcome of Natural and Civilized Progress—The Growth of Contraception—The Medical and Hygienic Necessity of Control of Conception—Preventive Methods—Abortion—How Far Justifiable?—Sterilization as a Method of Contraception—Negative Eugenics and Positive Eugenics—The Question of Certificates for Marriage—The Inadequacy of Eugenics by Act of Parliament—The Quickening of the Social Conscience in regard to Heredity—Limitation to the Endowment of Motherhood—The Conditions Favourable to Procreation—Sterility—The Question of Artificial Insemination—The Best Age of Procreation—The Question of Early Motherhood—The Best Time for Procreation—The Completion of the Cycle of Life.

WE have seen that the art of love has an independent and amply justifiable right to existence apart, altogether, from procreation. Even if we still believed—as all men must once have believed and some Central Australians yet believe—that sexual intercourse has no at all events essential connection with the propagation of the race it would have full right to existence. In its finer manifestations as an art it is required in civilization for the full development of the individual, and it is equally required for that stability of relationships which is nearly everywhere regarded as a demand of social morality.

When we now turn to the second great factor of marriage, procreation, the first point we encounter is that the art of love here also has its place. In ancient times the sexual congruence of any man with any woman was supposed to be so much a matter of course that all questions of love and of the art of love could be left out of consideration. The propagative act might, it was thought, be performed as impersonally, as perfunctorily, as the early Christian Fathers imagined it had been performed in Paradise. That view is no longer acceptable. It fails to commend itself to men, and still less to women. We know that in civilization at all events—and it is often indeed the same among savages—erethism is not always easy between two

persons selected at random, nor even when they are more specially selected. And we also know, on the authority of distinguished gynæcologists, that it is not in some cases, though a small minority, sufficient even to effect coitus, it is also necessary to excite orgasm, if conception is to be achieved.

Many primitive peoples, as well as the theologians of the Middle Ages, have believed that sexual excitement on the woman's part is necessary to conception, though they have sometimes mixed up that belief with false science and mere superstition. The belief itself is supported by some cautious and experienced modern gynæcologists like Matthews Duncan. Kisch dealt fully with this question, and reached the conclusion that it is "extremely probable" that the active erotic participation of the woman in coitus is a link in the chain of conditions favouring conception. It acts, he remarks, in either or both of two ways, by causing reflex changes in the cervical secretions and so facilitating the passage of the spermatozoa, and by causing reflex erectile changes in the cervix itself. Kisch referred to the analogous fact that the first occurrence of menstruation is favoured by sexual excitement. We cannot fail to connect the fact that impregnation frequently fails to occur for months and even years after marriage with the fact that sexual pleasure in coitus on the wife's part also frequently fails to occur for a similar period.

"Of all human instincts," Pinard has said, "that of reproduction is the only one which remains in the primitive condition and has received no education. We procreate to-day as they procreated in the Stone Age. The most important act in the life of man, the sublimest of all acts since it is that of his reproduction, man accomplishes to-day with as much carelessness as in the age of the cave-man." And though Pinard himself, as the founder of puericulture, greatly contributed to call attention to the vast destinies that hang on the act of procreation, there still remains a lamentable amount of truth in his statement. "Future generations," writes Westermarck in his history of moral ideas, "will probably with a kind of horror look back at a period when the most important, and in its consequences the most far-reaching, function which has fallen to the lot of man was entirely left to individual caprice and lust."

We are told in his *Table Talk*, that the great Luther was accustomed to say that God's way of making man was very foolish ("sehr närrisch"), and that if God had deigned to take him into His counsel he would have strongly advised Him to make the whole human race, as He made Adam, "out of earth." And certainly if applied to the careless and reckless manner in which procreation in Luther's day, as still for the most part in our own, was usually carried out there was sound common sense in the Reformer's remarks. If that is the way procreation is to be carried on, it would be better

to create and mould every human being afresh out of the earth; in that way we could at all events eliminate evil heredity. It was, however, unjust to place the responsibility on God. It is men and women who breed the people that make the world good or bad. They seek to put the evils of society on to something outside themselves and a belief in God satisfies the desire. They see how large a proportion of human beings are defective, ill-conditioned, anti-social, incapable of leading a whole and beautiful human life. In old theological language it was often said that such were "children of the Devil," and Luther himself was often ready enough to attribute the evils of the world to the direct interposition of the Devil. Yet these ill-conditioned people who clog the wheels of society are, after all, in reality the children of Man. The only Devil whom we can justly invoke in this matter is Man.

The command "Be fruitful and multiply," which the ancient Hebrews put into the mouth of their tribal God, was a command supposed to have been uttered when there were only eight persons in the world. If the time should ever again occur when the inhabitants of the world could be counted on one's fingers, such an injunction would again be reasonable. But we have to remember that to-day humanity has spawned itself over the world in hundreds and even thousands of millions of creatures, a large proportion of whom, as is but too obvious, ought never to have been born at all, and the voice of Jehovah is now making itself heard through the leaders of mankind in a very different sense.

It is not surprising that as this fact tends to become generally recognized, the question of the procreation of the race should gain a new significance, and even tend to take on the character of a new religious movement. Mere morality can never lead us to concern ourselves with the future of the race, and in the days of old, men used to protest against the tendency to subordinate the interests of religion to the claims of "mere morality." There was a sound natural instinct underlying that protest, so often and so vigorously made by Christianity, and again revived to-day in a more intelligent form. The claim of the race is the claim of religion. We have to beware lest we subordinate that claim to our moralities. Moralities are, indeed, an inevitable part of our social order from which we cannot escape; every community has its *mores*. But we are not entitled to make a fetish of our morality, sacrificing it to the highest interests entrusted to us. The nations which have done so have already signed their own death-warrant. From this point of view, the whole of Christianity, rightly considered, with its profound conviction of the necessity for forethought and preparation for the life hereafter, has been a preparation for eugenics, a schoolmaster to discipline within us a higher ideal than itself taught, and we cannot therefore be surprised at the

solidity of the basis on which eugenical conceptions of life are developing.

The most distinguished pioneers of the new movement of devotion to the creation of the race seem independently to have realized its religious character. This attitude was equally marked in Ellen Key and Francis Galton. In her *Century of the Child* Ellen Key entirely identified herself with the eugenic movement. "It is only a question of time," she wrote, "when the attitude of society towards a sexual union will depend not on the form of the union, but on the value of the children created. Men and women will then devote the same religious earnestness to the psychic and physical perfectioning of this sexual task as Christians have devoted to the salvation of their souls." Sir Francis Galton, writing a few years later, but without doubt independently, in 1905, remarked: "Religious precepts, founded on the ethics and practice of older days, require to be reinterpreted to make them conform to the needs of progressive nations. Ours are already so far behind modern requirements that much of our practice and our profession cannot be reconciled without illegitimate casuistry. It seems to me that few things are more needed by us in England than a revision of our religion, to adapt it to the intelligence and needs of this present time. Evolution is a grand phantasmagoria, but it assumes an infinitely more interesting aspect under the knowledge that the intelligent action of the human will is, in some small measure, capable of guiding its course. Eugenics is a virile creed, full of hopefulness, and appealing to many of the noblest feelings of our nature."

As will always happen in every great movement, a few fanatics have carried into absurdity the belief in the religious importance of procreation. Love, apart from procreation, writes one of these fanatics, Vacher de Lapouge, in the spirit of some of the early Christian Fathers, is an aberration comparable to sadism and sodomy. Procreation is the only thing that matters, and it must become "a legally prescribed social duty" only to be exercised by carefully selected persons, and forbidden to others, who must be deprived of the power of procreation, while abortion and infanticide must, under some circumstances, become compulsory. Romantic love will disappear by a process of selection, as also will all religion except a new form of phallic worship. Such excesses of procreative fanaticism render the more necessary the emphasis on the art of love.

"What has posterity done for me that I should do anything for posterity?" a cynic is said to have asked. The answer is very simple. The human race has done everything for him. All that he is, and can be, is its creation; all that he can do is the result of its laboriously accumulated traditions. It is only by working towards the creation of a still better posterity, that he can repay the good gifts which the

human race has brought him. Just as, within the limits of this present life, many who have received benefits and kindnesses they can never repay to the actual givers, find a pleasure in vicariously repaying the like to others, so the heritage we have received from our ascendants we can never repay save by handing it on in a better form to our descendants.[1]

It is undoubtedly true that the conscious growth of eugenical ideals has not been, for the most part, due to religious feeling. It has been chiefly the outcome of a gradual, but comprehensive, movement towards social amelioration, which has been going on for more than a century, and which has involved a progressive effort towards the betterment of all the conditions of life. The ideals of this movement were proclaimed in the eighteenth century, they began to find expression early in the nineteenth century, in the initiation of the modern system of sanitation, in the growth of factory legislation, in all the movements which have been borne onwards by socialism hand in hand with individualism. The inevitable tendency has been slowly towards the root of the matter; it began to be seen that comparatively little can be effected by improving the conditions of life of adults; attention began to be concentrated on the child, on the infant, on the embryo in its mother's womb, and this resulted in the fruitful movement of puericulture, and finally the problem is brought to its source at the point of procreation, and the regulation of sexual selection between stocks and between individuals as the prime condition of life. Here we have the science of eugenics which Galton first began to make a definite, vital, and practical study, which in its wider bearings he defined as man's attempt "to replace Natural Selection by other processes that are more merciful and not less effective."[2]

At one time there was a tendency to scoff at the eugenic movement.

[1] *Heredity in Man* (1929) by Ruggles Gates is widely regarded as the most thorough general treatise of the subject of eugenics in man to its date. The most complete storehouse of facts and investigations bearing on the relation of heredity to environment is the indispensable work of Gladys Schwesinger, *Heredity and Environment* (1933), equally valuable for its detail and its unprejudiced standpoint. A comprehensive summary of the new hypotheses and potentialities of endocrinology in sex is furnished by Dr. J. M. Robson, of the Active Institute of Genetics of Edinburgh University, in his *Recent Advances in Sex and Reproductive Activity* (1934), and there is the still more recent (1937) *Principles of Genetics* by C. H. Waddington, of Cambridge. But it must be remembered that these advances continue, and the latest must be sought in the leading medical and scientific journals of the day.

[2] In the last chapter of his *Memories of My Life* (1908), on "Race Improvement," Galton set forth the origin and development of his conception of the science of eugenics. The term "eugenics," he first used in 1884, in his *Human Faculty*, but the conception dates from 1865, and even earlier. Galton's numerous memoirs on this subject are published in a collected form by the Eugenics Society, which was established in 1907, to further and to popularize the eugenical attitude towards social questions; the valuable *Eugenics Review* is published by this Society.

It was regarded as an attempt to breed men as men breed animals, and it was thought a sufficiently easy task to sweep away this new movement with the remark that love laughs at bolts and bars. It is now beginning to be better understood. None but fanatics dream of abolishing love in order to effect pairing by rule. It is merely a question of limiting the possible number of mates from whom each may select a partner, and that, we must remember, has always been done even by savages, for, as it has been said, " eugenics is the oldest of the sciences."

In his authoritative and comprehensive work on the population problem, Professor Carr-Saunders has made clear the eugenic measures consciously or unconsciously exercised in former ages or by lower human races. When our biological knowledge increases we shall doubtless be able to go still further back and make clear what eugenic measures are practised by animals.[1] The would-be scientists who belittle the eugenics of which they are themselves the outcome have arrived on the scene a million or more years too late. The question has merely been transformed. Instead of being unconscious or limited mechanically by caste, we begin to see that the choice of sexual mates must be limited intelligently by actual fitness. Promiscuous marriages have never been the rule ; the possibility of choice has always been narrow, and the most primitive peoples have exerted the most marked self-restraint. It is not so merely among remote races but among our own European ancestors. Throughout the whole period of Catholic supremacy the Canon law multiplied the impediments to matrimony, as by ordaining that consanguinity to the fourth degree (third cousins), as well as spiritual relationship, is an impediment, and by such arbitrary prohibitions limited the range of possible mates at least as much as it would be limited by the more reasonable dictates of eugenic considerations.

At the present day it may be said that the principle of the voluntary control of procreation, not for the selfish ends of the individual, but in order to help to extinguish disease, to limit human misery, and to raise the general level of humanity by substituting the ideal of quality for the vulgar ideal of mere quantity, is now generally accepted, alike by medical pathologists, geneticists, and neurologists, and by sociologists and moralists.

If we ask by what channels this impulse towards the control of procreation is expressing itself in practical life, we shall scarcely fail to find that there are at least two such channels : (1) the growing sense of sexual responsibility among women as well as men, and (2) the conquest

[1] Thus there is some evidence to show that in India, among some species of monkeys, when the female produces more than one offspring at a birth, she will shake the branch to which they hang and only preserve the one strong enough to retain his hold.

of procreative control which has been achieved in recent years by the general adoption of methods for the prevention of conception.

It has already been necessary in a previous chapter to discuss the far-reaching significance of woman's personal responsibility as an element in the modification of the sexual life of modern communities. Here it need only be pointed out that the autonomous authority of a woman over her own person, in the sexual sphere, involves on her part a consent to the act of procreation which must be deliberate. We are apt to think that this is a new and almost revolutionary demand; it is, however, undoubtedly a natural, ancient, and recognized privilege of women that they should not be mothers without their own consent. Even in the Islamic world of the *Arabian Nights*, we find that high praise is accorded to the "virtue and courage" of the woman who, having been ravished in her sleep, exposed and abandoned on the highway the infant that was the fruit of this involuntary union, "not wishing," she said, "to take the responsibility before Allah of a child that had been born without my consent." The approval with which this story is narrated clearly shows that to the public of Islam it seemed entirely just and humane that a woman should not have a child except by her own deliberate will. We have been accustomed to say in later days that the State needs children, and that it is the business and the duty of women to supply them. But the State has no more right than the individual to ravish a woman against her will. We are beginning to realize that if the State wants children it must make it agreeable to women to produce them, as under natural and equitable conditions it cannot fail to be. "The women will solve the question of mankind," said Ibsen in one of his rare and pregnant private utterances, "and they will do it as mothers." But it is unthinkable that any such "question" should ever be solved by a helpless, unwilling, and involuntary act which has not even attained to the dignity of animal joy.

It is sometimes supposed that the demand of women that motherhood must never be compulsory, means that they are unwilling to be mothers on any terms. In a few cases that may be so, but it is certainly not the case as regards the majority of sane and healthy women in any country. On the contrary, this demand is usually associated with the desire to glorify motherhood, even with the thought of extending motherhood to many who are to-day shut out from it. Thus Ellen Key, while pointing out that the tyranny of the old Protestant religious spirit which enjoined on women unlimited submission to joyless motherhood within "the whited sepulchre of marriage" is now being broken, exalted the privileges of voluntary motherhood, though admitting that there may be exceptional cases in which women withdraw themselves from motherhood for the sake of the other demands of their personality. Helene Stöcker, likewise, reckons motherhood as

one of the growing demands of women. " If, to-day," she says, " all the good things of life are claimed even for women—intellectual training, pecuniary independence, a happy vocation in life, a respected social position—and at the same time, as equally matter-of-course and equally necessary, marriage and child, that demand no longer sounds, as it sounded a few years ago, the voice of a preacher in the wilderness."

The degradation to which motherhood has, in the eyes of many, fallen, is due partly to the tendency to deprive women of any voice in the question and partly to what H. G. Wells calls " the monstrous absurdity of women discharging their supreme social function, bearing and rearing children, in their spare time, as it were, while they ' earn their living ' by contributing some half mechanical element to some trivial industrial product." It would be impracticable, and even undesirable, to insist that married women should not be allowed to work, for work in the world is good for all. But it would be easily possible for the State to arrange, in its own interests, that a woman's work at a trade should always give way to her work as a mother. It is the more undesirable that married women should be prohibited from working at a profession, since there are some professions for which a married woman, or, rather, a mother, is better equipped than an unmarried woman. This is notably the case as regards teaching, and it would be a good policy to allow married women teachers special privileges in the shape of increased free time and leave of absence. While in many fields of knowledge an unmarried woman may be a most excellent teacher, it is highly undesirable that children, and especially girls, should be brought exclusively under the educational influence of unmarried teachers.

The second great channel through which the impulse towards the control of procreation is entering practical life is the adoption by the educated classes of all countries—and it must be remembered that, in this matter at all events, all classes are gradually beginning to become educated—of methods for the prevention of conception except when conception is deliberately desired. It is no longer permissible to discuss the validity of this control, for it is an accomplished fact and has become a part of our modern morality. " If a course of conduct is habitually and deliberately pursued by vast multitudes of otherwise well-conducted people, forming probably a majority of the whole educated class of the nation," as Sidney Webb rightly puts it, " we must assume that it does not conflict with their actual code of morality." There cannot be any doubt that, so far as England is concerned, the prevention of conception is practised, from prudential or other motives, by the vast majority of the educated classes, and no longer excluding the working class. It has been continuous since 1877.

What is true of Great Britain is true of other civilized countries, and it finds expression in the well-known phenomenom of the decline

of the birth-rate. In modern times, this movement of decline began in France, producing a slow but steady diminution in the annual number of births, and in France the movement seems now to be almost, or quite, arrested. But it has since taken place in most progressive countries. Of the great countries, Soviet Russia, where the birth-rate as well as the death-rate has always been high, seems the only one in which it has not yet taken place.

It is sometimes said, indeed, that the decline of the birth-rate is not entirely due to the voluntary control of procreation. It is undoubtedly true that certain other elements, common under civilized conditions, such as the postponement of marriage in women to a comparatively late age, tend to diminish the size of the family. In any case the decline in the birth-rate, as in the death-rate, is real and large. But the problem is more complicated than is supposed by those who only regard the question of the acceptance or rejection of preventive methods. It has been found by most careful investigations, alike in England (as by Sidney Webb) and in the United States (as by Katharine Davis), that those who practise contraceptive methods have larger families than those who neglect all precautions. Dr. Davis would explain this by supposing that those who adopt precautions do so because they know they would otherwise have families too large. We must also remember that reckless procreation leads to a large infantile mortality. But the problem, we see, is complex. It would seem that the slogan for the propagandists of procreation should really be : More Birth Control !

Some have supposed that, since the Catholic Church forbids incomplete sexual intercourse, this movement for the control of procreation will involve a relatively much greater increase among Catholic than among non-Catholic populations. This, however, is only correct under poor cultural conditions. In Belgium, Italy, Spain, and other mainly Catholic countries, the decline in the birth-rate is duly taking place. What has happened is that the Church—always alive to sexual questions—has realized the importance of the modern movement, and has adapted herself to it, by proclaiming to her more ignorant and uneducated children that incomplete intercourse is a deadly sin, while at the same time refraining from making inquiries into this matter among her more educated members. The question was definitely brought up for Papal judgment, in 1842, by Bishop Bouvier of Le Mans, who represented to the Pope (Gregory XVI) that the prevention of conception was becoming very common, and that to treat it as a deadly sin merely resulted in driving the penitent away from confession. After mature consideration, the Curia Sacra Poenitentiaria replied by pointing out, as regards the common method of withdrawal before emission, that since it was due to the wrong act of the man, the woman who has been forced by her husband

to consent to it has committed no sin. Further, the Bishop was reminded of the wise dictum of Liguori, "the most learned and experienced man in these matters," that the confessor is not usually called upon to make inquiry upon so delicate a matter as the *debitum conjugale*, and, if his opinion is not asked, he should be silent. We see in the Unites States that, among Catholics as well as among non-Catholic populations, the adoption of preventive methods of conception follows progress and civilization, and that the general practice of such methods by Catholics (with the tacit consent of the Church) is merely a matter of time. The Church is, indeed, now adapting itself to contraception by giving approval to the method of restricting intercourse to what has been termed the "safe period" of the month. However, even though conception may be less likely to occur at this period, the best authorities agree that the "safety" is completely unreliable.

At one time many energetic persons noisily demanded that a stop should be put to the decline of the birth-rate, for, they argue, it means "race suicide." It is now beginning to be realized that this outcry, if not foolish and mischievous, is at all events raised too soon. It is impossible to walk through the streets of any great city, full of vast numbers of persons who, obviously, ought never to have been born, without recognizing that the birth-rate is as yet very far above its normal and healthy limit. The greatest States have often been the smallest so far as mere number of citizens is concerned, for it is quality, not quantity, that counts. And while it is true that the increase of the best types of citizens can only enrich a State, it is now becoming intolerable that a nation should increase by the mere dumping down of procreative refuse in its midst. It is beginning to be realized that this process not only depreciates the quality of a people but imposes on a State an inordinate financial burden.

It is now recognized that large families are frequently associated with degeneracy, and, in the widest sense, with abnormality of every kind. It is true that men of genius sometimes belong to large families, though it may be pointed out to those who fear an alarming decrease of genius from the tendency to the limitation of the family, that the position in the family most often occupied by the child of genius is the firstborn. The insane, the idiotic, imbecile, and weak-minded, the criminal, the epileptic, the hysterical, the neurasthenic, the tubercular, all, it would appear, tend to belong to large families. It has, indeed, been shown by Heron, Pearson, and Goring, that the eldest-born, and also the second-born, are specially liable to suffer from pathological defect (insanity, criminality, tuberculosis). There is, however, it would seem, a fallacy in the common interpretation of this fact, for this tendency appears to be counter-balanced by the rising mortality of children from the first-born onward. The greater pathological

tendency of the earlier children is thus simply the result of a less stringent selection by death. There is another fallacy in the frequent statement that the children in small families are more feeble than those in large families. We have to distinguish between a naturally small family and an artificially small family. A family which is small merely as the result of the feeble procreative energy of the parents is likely to be a feeble family; a family which is small as the result of the deliberate control of the parents shows, of course, no such tendency.

These considerations, it will be seen, do not modify the liability of the large family to be degenerate. We may connect this phenomenon with the disposition, often shown by nervously unsound and abnormal persons, to believe that they have a special aptitude to procreate fine children. "I believe that everyone has a special vocation," said a man to Marro; "I find that it is my vocation to beget superior children." He begat four—an epileptic, a lunatic, a dipsomaniac, and a valetudinarian—and himself died insane. Most people have come across somewhat similar, though perhaps less marked, cases of this delusion. In a matter of such fateful gravity to other human beings, no one can safely rely on his own unsupported impressions.

Of late we have seen renewed outcries among the talented race of alarmists over the falling birth-rate. They long for the return of those procreative days when the birth-rate was rapidly rising and when a labourer's wife could reply to Anna Seward's remark that she had a large family: "Yes, Madam, but God be thanked, we have buried a many childer, and I often tell my husband, belike God will be so koind to take most of these too." The mathematicians have now been enlisted in the cause, and they have brought forward arguments to show that, at the present rate of decline, the birth-rate is approaching zero, and that within a measurable distance of time the human race will have disappeared. In their concentration on this lamentable result of their investigation, they do not seem to be aware that at a not very remote period mankind was content with an almost stationary population incomparably smaller than at present, that the later increased rate of human production was quite abnormal, that the disorder it introduced was further increased by the still continuing conquests of medicine and hygiene in diminishing the death-rate, that it became necessary to substitute humane and artificial methods for the natural but cruel methods of restricting the growth of population, and that, in any case, the fall or rise of the birth-rate to-day tells us nothing whatever about the birth-rate to-morrow, even though we know that among the higher biological species and at the higher human cultural levels the birth-rate is always low. Yet all these considerations are relevant to the problem. We may suspect, indeed, that even though they may seek to conceal

it, at the back of the minds of these alarmists, or in their unconscious, there is the ancient Napoleonic anxiety over "cannon-fodder." It is significant that the alarmists are not among those who would substitute arbitration for war or abolish armaments. They never point out in their procreative propaganda that, among the general population, gas masks for babies are the worst possible advertisements for procreation.

I do not wish to imply that this agitation over the birth-rate, however scientific the shape it seems to take, is countenanced by reputable men of science. They accept it as an interesting and important problem deserving of serious investigation in an impartial spirit. Such investigation is now being undertaken by the Population Investigation Committee. Meanwhile we may note the conclusion of one of our most distinguished economists, J. M. Keynes, in his not too optimistic Galton Lecture, that "a stationary or slowly declining population may, if we exercise the necessary strength and wisdom, enable us to raise the standard of life to what it should be, whilst retaining those parts of our traditional scheme of life which we value."[1]

The demand of national efficiency corresponds with the demand of developing humanitarianism, which, having begun by attempting to ameliorate the conditions of life, has gradually begun to realize that it is necessary to go deeper and to ameliorate life itself. For while it is undoubtedly true that much may be done by acting systematically on the conditions of life, the more searching analysis of evil environmental conditions only serves to show that in large part they are based in the human organism itself and were not only pre-natal, but pre-conceptional, being involved in the quality of the parental or ancestral organisms.

Putting aside, however, all humanitarian considerations, the serious error of attempting to stem the progress of civilization in the direction of procreative control could never have occurred if the general tendencies of zoological evolution had been understood, even in their elements. All zoological progress is from the more prolific to the less prolific; the higher the species the less fruitful are its individual members. The same tendency is found within the limits of the human species, though not in an invariable straight line; the growth of civilization involves a diminution in fertility. This is by no means a new phenomenon; ancient Rome and later Geneva, "the Protestant Rome," bear witness to it; no doubt it has occurred in every high centre of moral and intellectual culture, although the data for measuring the tendency no longer exist. When we take a sufficiently wide and intelligent survey, we realize that the tendency of a community to slacken its natural rate of increase is an essential

[1] See the Galton Lecture in *Eugenics Review*, April, 1937.

phenomenon of all advanced civilization. The more intelligent nations have manifested the tendency first, and in each nation the more educated classes have taken the lead, but it is only a matter of time to bring all civilized nations, and all social classes in each nation, into line. It is evident that even among the poorer classes there is a process of levelling up to the higher classes in this matter. This movement, we have to remember—in opposition to the ignorant outcry of certain would-be moralists and politicians—is a beneficent movement. It means a greater regard to the quality than to the quantity of the increase; it involves the possibility of combating successfully the evils of high mortality, disease, overcrowding, and all the manifold misfortunes which inevitably accompany a too exuberant birth-rate. For it is only in a community which increases, if at all, slowly that it is possible to secure the adequate economic adjustment and environmental modifications necessary for a sane and wholesome civic and personal life.

On the practical side a knowledge of the possibility of preventing conception has, doubtless, never been quite extinct in civilization and even in lower stages of culture,[1] though it has mostly been utilized for ends of personal convenience or practised in obedience to conventional social rules which demanded chastity, and has only of recent times been made subservient to the larger interests of society and the amelioration of the race. The theoretical basis of the control of procreation, on its social and economic as distinct from its eugenic aspects, may be said to date from Malthus's famous *Essay on Population,* first published in 1798, an epoch-marking book—though its central thesis is not susceptible of actual demonstration—since it not only served as the starting-point of the modern humanitarian movement for the control of procreation, but also furnished to Darwin (and independently to Wallace also) the fruitful idea which was finally developed into the great evolutionary theory of natural selection.

Malthus, however, was far from suggesting that the control of procreation, which he advocated for the benefit of mankind, should be exercised by the introduction of preventive methods into sexual intercourse. He believed that civilization involved an increased power of self-control, which would make it possible to refrain altogether from sexual intercourse, when such self-restraint was demanded in the interests of humanity. Later thinkers realized, however, that, while it may be true that civilization involves greater forethought

[1] Prof. Norman Himes in learned *Medical History of Contraception*, 1936 (as well as in articles in the *Encyclopedia Sexualis*), has revealed the extent to which contraception was known in antiquity and practised among savage tribes. The earliest medical prescription for contraception, he states, is contained in an Egyptian papyrus of 1850 B.C.; it is for a vaginal suppository of acacia tips; these would liberate lactic acid which is still used as a spermicide.

and self-control, we cannot anticipate that those qualities should be developed to the extent demanded by Malthus, especially when the impulse to be controlled is of so powerful and explosive a nature.

James Mill was the pioneer in advocating Neo-Malthusian methods, though he spoke cautiously. In 1818, in the article "Colony" in the supplement to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, after remarking that the means of checking the unrestricted increase of the population constitutes "the most important practical problem to which the wisdom of the politician and moralist can be applied," he continued: "If the superstitions of the nursery were discarded, and the principle of utility kept steadily in view, a solution might not be very difficult to be found." Four years later, James Mill's friend, the Radical reformer, Francis Place, more distinctly expressed the thought that was evidently in Mill's mind. Place's contraceptive handbills were profusely circulated among the poorer class with great energy, and his efforts were well seconded by Richard Carlile, another popular and still more outspoken propagandist. In 1831, Robert Dale Owen, the son of Robert Owen, published his memorable work, *Moral Physiology*, setting forth the methods of preventing conception. A little later the brothers George and Charles Drysdale (born 1825 and 1829), two ardent and unwearying philanthropists, devoted much of their energy to the propagation of Neo-Malthusian principles. It was, however, in 1833 that a medical work on the control of contraception first appeared, and then in the United States, the author being Dr. Charles Knowlton of Massachusetts, and the book *Fruits of Philosophy*, written with much ability and far in advance of its time. In 1854, in London, Dr. George Drysdale published his *Elements of Social Science*, which during many years had an enormous circulation all over Europe in eight different languages. It was by no means in every respect a scientific or sound work, but it certainly had great influence, and it came into the hands of many who never saw any other work on sexual topics. In 1877, Charles Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant were prosecuted for disseminating Knowlton's book. This trial, even by its mere publicity, gave an enormous impetus to the Neo-Malthusian movement. The steady decline in the English birth-rate following the trial has often been considered to be in part a result of it.

The establishment of medical contraceptive clinics lingered, and the first was set up in Holland, by a woman, Dr. Aletta Jacobs, in 1881. It was in 1916 that Margaret Sanger, the now famous pioneer of Birth Control (a term for which she was responsible) in the United States, after a visit to England and Holland, set up the first clinic in Brooklyn. That lasted only a short time, but by Margaret Sanger's tireless and heroic efforts it led the way to a more firmly established

clinic and ultimately to a vast number of such clinics.[1] The movement became firmly established with the foundation, under Margaret Sanger, of the Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau of New York in 1923. The Bureau (under the direction of Margaret Sanger and Drs. Abraham and Hannah Stone) publishes the valuable *Journal of Contraception*, devoted to developing biological and clinical aspects of the subject. Meanwhile, Dr. Marie Stopes, the most active and prominent English champion of birth control, set up the first London clinic in 1921, and was immediately followed by Dr. and Mrs. Drysdale, who had for long previously been pioneers of Neo-Malthusian methods, having founded the Malthusian League in 1877 and edited a periodical devoted to the cause. There are now many excellent birth control clinics in England, and this function forms, or should form, one of the activities of Maternal Welfare Centres.

The deliberate control of procreation, we see, is now embodied in the practical morality of civilized nations, and it is generally recognized by medical authorities that the prevention of conception is under certain circumstances, and the spacing of births indeed always, necessary and quite harmless, though doctors, not having themselves been taught, are by no means always qualified to superintend it. It arouses a smile to-day when we find that a century ago it was possible for an able and esteemed medical author to declare that the use of " various abominable means " to prevent conception is " based upon a most presumptuous doubt in the conservative power of the Creator." [2]

The adaptation of theory to practice is not yet complete, and we could not expect that it should be so, for, as we have seen, there is always an antagonism between practical morality and traditional morality. From time to time flagrant illustrations of this antagonism occur. Even in England, which played a pioneering part in the control of procreation, attempts are still made—sometimes in quarters where we have a right to expect a better knowledge—to cast discredit on a

1 See for the history of her efforts, Margaret Sanger's book, *My Fight for Birth Control* (1931). Even since then she has been active in pioneering a much-needed birth control movement in Eastern countries, especially India, and is at the same time stimulating the research for cheap and effective contraceptives to meet the demands of the submerged social classes. Recently (1936) a judicial decision in the United States, upholding the right of physicians to circulate contraceptives, has been secured.

2 Michael Ryan, *Philosophy of Marriage*, p. 9. To enable " the conservative power of the Creator " to exert itself on the myriads of germinal human beings secreted during his life-time by even one man, would require more than a world full of women, while the corresponding problem as regards a woman is altogether too difficult to cope with. The process by which life has been built up, far from being a process of universal conservation, has been a process of stringent selection and vast destruction ; the progress effected by civilization merely lies in making this blind process intelligent.

movement which, since it has conquered alike scientific approval and popular practice, it is now idle to call in question.

It would be out of place to discuss here the various methods which are used for the control of procreation, or their respective merits and defects. It is sufficient to say that the condom or protective sheath, which seems to be the most ancient of all methods of preventing conception, after withdrawal, was up to some thirty years ago regarded by nearly all authorities as, when properly used, the safest, the most convenient, and the most harmless method. Since then the Birth Control Clinics have usually prescribed some form of shield or pessary, inserted into the vagina to cover the mouth of the womb, usually in combination with a spermicidal jelly as an extra precaution. But the condom is still recommended by many experts and indeed regarded as still the commonest of contraceptive appliances (withdrawal being the second method, and douching the next, neither of them satisfactory). It dates from nearly a century ago when the vulcanization of rubber was introduced, and in recent years further improvements have taken place, especially in America, by which the sheath is rendered both more delicately tenuous and more resistant to injury. The history of the condom and its precursors is authoritatively told by Himes in an article in the *Encyclopedia Sexualis.* It is not only out of place to deal here with the practical methods of birth control, but in any case unnecessary as there is now a very extensive and often excellent literature dealing with the subject.[1]

The control of procreation by the prevention of conception, which has thus become part of the morality of civilized peoples, has been termed " one of the most revolutionary changes in modern times." Indeed, it has been said that as the nineteenth century is associated

[1] A simple and useful little manual which has had a wide circulation is *Parenthood : Design or Accident* ? (2nd edition, revised, 1934, with a Preface by H. G. Wells) by a medical author who here calls himself Michael Fielding. A more detailed but clear exposition by an experienced surgeon is *Birth Control Methods* by Norman Haire (1936). A very elaborate work from the gynœcological standpoint is Dr. Van de Velde's *Fertility and Sterility in Marriage.* Another thorough and authoritative work by a distinguished American gynœcologist, Dr. R. L Dickinson, assisted by Dr Louise Bryant, is *Control of Conception: an Illustrated Medical Manual.* Dr. Dickinson has also written a commendatory Preface for Mrs. Dorothy Bromley's *Birth Control : Its Use and Misuse*, a well-written book discussing the subject in its wider bearings. Another book still wider in character by Dr. Hannah Stone, long associated with Margaret Sanger and here assisted by her husband, Dr. Abraham Stone, is *A Marriage Manual : A Practical Guide Book to Sex and Marriage* (1936) ; it takes the form of questions and answers covering the most intimate aspects of sex. There are numerous books by Dr. Marie Stopes on various aspects of the subject. Other books that may be mentioned are Dr. Isabel Hutton's *Hygiene of Marriage* (reprinted in America as *The Technique of Marriage*), which has had a large circulation and much approval, Dr. Gladys Cox's *Clinical Contraception*, and Dr. Edward Griffith's *Modern Marriage and Birth Control*, which has been (1937) re-issued to an enormous public by the Left Book Club and is the lowest priced book on the subject.

with the rationalization of production, so the twentieth will be known as the period of the rationalization of reproduction. There is another method, not indeed for preventing conception, but for limiting offspring, which is of more ancient appearance in the world, though it has at different times been differently viewed and still arouses widely opposing opinions. This is the method of abortion.

While the practice of abortion is by no means, like the practice of preventing conception, accepted by law and medicine, it scarcely excites profound repulsion in the population of civilized countries. The majority of women, not excluding educated and highly moral women, who become pregnant against their wish contemplate the possibility of procuring abortion without the slightest twinge of conscience, and often are not even aware of the usual professional attitude of the Church, the law, and medicine regarding abortion. Probably all doctors have encountered this fact, and even so distinguished and correct a medicolegist as Brouardel stated that he had been not infrequently solicited to procure abortion, for themselves or their wet-nurses, by ladies who looked on it as a perfectly natural thing, and had not the least suspicion that the law regarded the deed as a crime.

This is not merely the attitude of individual women but of the mass of the feminine population. Thus the Co-operative Women's Congress of 1934, in view of the persistently high maternal death-rate and the evils arising from the illegal practice of abortion, called upon the Government to revise the present abortion laws by bringing them into harmony with modern conditions and ideas, making abortion a legal operation which can be carried out under the same conditions as any other operation. Other feminine associations have moved in the same direction. It may be pointed out that abortion is not, as some might suppose, merely desired by unmarried women anxious to conceal an illegitimate pregnancy; it is chiefly sought by married women with already as many children as they can provide for. Nor is the approval of abortion now held in check by antiquated religious dogmas. The Catholic Church is opposed to abortion under any circumstances, yet the practice is extremely common among Catholic women, as indeed we might anticipate, since the Church is unfavourable to birth control measures which tend to make abortion unnecessary. In the Protestant churches, ministers of religion are sometimes emphatic in approval of abortion. Thus one writes to me, on behalf of himself and his wife, that they have three children, and it is imperative that they should have no more. They know all that there is to know about contraception and they also know that contraceptives are never absolutely certain. They desire to eliminate even the slightest shadow of a possible unwanted pregnancy, and to continue such complete freedom in the relationship as will permit it to remain a spiritual adventure.

"At least," he declares, "we ought to have the assurance of available immediate and safe abortion, although we feel that abortion is a threat to a woman's psychic nature which tends to unfold lovingly." Such an attitude to-day appears entirely reasonable even to genuinely religious people. If we turn to the profession of the law, we find that eminent judges and distinguished authorities in this field have clearly recognized that the law is out of date, and ought to be changed; the legal argument has, for instance, been brought forward that the present law regards abortion as "murder," but murder is only applicable to a human being, and the fœtus until late in its development cannot accurately be regarded as a human being, but is definitely on the merely animal level. Canon law, also, though leaving the matter rather obscure, was inclined to follow the Roman jurists and to regard the fœtus as not "animated" before, usually, the fortieth day, and its destruction before that time was only punishable by a fine. Finally, in the medical profession—in which, if properly recognized, the key to the situation would lie—there is constant doubt and hesitation, a profound realization of the misery, suffering and death involved by the present law, as well as its dangers for the medical profession, and yet a lingering respect for law however antiquated. Over twenty years ago a distinguished medical authority stated that the attempt to suppress abortion by severe penalties had clearly failed, and was bound to fail since it was opposed to popular opinion which refused to regard what was really an act of self-defence as a crime. There can be no doubt that the morality of to-day, even when recognizing the natural risks of artificial abortion, accepts it as, under our social and economic conditions, legitimate, and views the present law as, in the term applied to it by responsible persons, "immoral."

It is nowaday unnecessary to expatiate on the prevalence in all civilized countries of illegal abortion, and on the incalculable amount of misery, disease, and death thus caused. In skilled hands the operation, though not without risks, is usually simple and safe; in the ignorant and unskilled hands of the criminal abortionists, whom our laws encourage, and, one may say, compel to undertake this task, it is highly dangerous, the more so since it tends to be carelessly and recklessly carried out by persons who know the risks they are running. In America—and conditions are much the same elsewhere—the New York Academy of Medicine concluded in a special study a few years ago, that 77.1 per cent. of the deaths from illegal abortion need not have occurred, and this takes no account of all the sterility and invalidism produced. The evils of our abortion laws extend indeed far beyond the dangers of the actual unskilled operation. In every village there are healthy and respectable married women, anxious to avoid unduly large families, who spend far more money than they can

afford, and seriously impair their health, by taking drugs which do not produce the desired effect, but are often mischievous and even poisonous. It is impossible to estimate the number of criminal abortions in Great Britain and America, but all authorities agree that it is enormous, and it is believed that perhaps only one case in a thousand is discovered. If we turn to other countries it is the same. Thus in France a female abortionist admitted 10,000 abortions in eight years. In Germany, a chemist who was at last brought to trial admitted that during many years some 11,000 women had come to him for help ; it could not be proved that he had taken advantage of their need to enrich himself ; his motives were humane and benevolent, but he was sent to prison. It is, moreover, generally agreed that the prevalence of this still illegal abortion is everywhere increasing, partly through increased knowledge, partly through the growing sense of its justification, and partly through the willingness of married women with large families, and perhaps delicate health, to endure any suffering if they may thereby be saved from further child-bearing.

In view of these facts it is not surprising that the induction of abortion has been permitted and even encouraged in many civilizations. Its unqualified condemnation is only found in Christendom, and is due to theoretical notions. In Turkey, under ordinary circumstances, there is no punishment for abortion. In the classic civilization of Greece and Rome, likewise, abortion was permitted though with certain qualifications and conditions. Plato admitted the mother's right to decide on abortion but said that the question should be settled as early as possible in pregnancy. Aristotle, who approved of abortion, was of the same opinion. Zeno and the Stoics regarded the fœtus as the fruit of the womb, the soul being acquired at birth. Among the Romans abortion became very common, but, in accordance with the patriarchal basis of early Roman institutions, it was the father, not the mother, who had the right to exercise it. Christianity introduced a new circle of ideas based on the importance of the soul, on its immortality, and the necessity of baptism as a method of salvation from the results of inherited sin. We already see this new attitude in St. Augustine, who, discussing whether embryos that died in the womb will rise at the resurrection, says " I make bold neither to affirm nor to deny, although I fail to see why, if they are not excluded from the number of the dead, they should not attain to the resurrection of the dead." The criminality of abortion was, however, speedily established, and the early Christian Emperors, in agreement with the Church, edicted many fantastic and extreme penalties against abortion. This tendency continued under ecclesiastical influence, unrestrained, until the humanitarian movement of the eighteenth century, when Beccaria, Voltaire, Rousseau and other great reformers succeeded in turning the tide of public opinion against the barbarity

of the laws, and the penalty of death for abortion was finally abolished.

Medical science and practice up to the present day—although not speaking with an absolutely unanimous voice—on the whole occupied a position midway between that of the classic lawyers and that of the later Christian ecclesiastics. It has been, on the whole, in favour of sacrificing the fœtus whenever the interests of the mother demand such a sacrifice, but has not been prepared to go further, disinclined to aid the parents in exerting an unqualified control over the fœtus in the womb, nor disposed to practise abortion on eugenic grounds. It is obvious, indeed, that medicine cannot in this matter take the initiative, for it is the primary duty of medicine to save life. Society itself must assume the responsibility of protecting the race.

Pinard, in the last century, inspired by his enthusiastic propaganda for the salvation of infant life, was led to the unwarranted conclusion that no one has the rights of life and death over the fœtus; "the infant's right to his life is an imprescriptible and sacred right, which no power can take from him." There is a mistake here, unless Pinard deliberately desired to place himself, like Tolstoy, in opposition to current civilized morality. So far from the infant having any "imprescriptible right to life," even the adult has, in human societies, no such inalienable right, and much less the fœtus, which is not strictly a human being at all. We assume the right of terminating the lives of those individuals whose anti-social conduct makes them dangerous, and, in war, we deliberately terminate, amid general applause and enthusiasm, the lives of men who have been specially selected for their physical and general efficiency. It would be absurdly inconsistent to say that we have no rights over the lives of creatures that have, as yet, no part in human society at all, and are not so much as born. We are here in presence of a vestige of ancient theological dogma, and there can be little doubt that, on the theoretical side at all events, the "imprescriptible right" of the embryo will go the same way as the "imprescriptible right" of the spermatozoon. Both rights are indeed "imprescriptible."

It was at the end of last century that a new aspect of this question of abortion was revealed. Hitherto it had been a question entirely in the hands of men, first, following the Roman traditions, in the hands of Christian ecclesiastics, and later, in those of the professional castes. Yet the question is largely, and indeed mainly, a woman's question, and it began, more especially in Germany, to be actively taken up by women. The Gräfin Gisela Streitberg occupies the pioneering place in this movement with her book *Das Recht zur Beiseitigung Keimenden Lebens*, and was speedily followed, from 1897 onwards, by a number of distinguished women who occupied a prominent place in the German woman's movement, among others Helene Stöcker. They insisted that the fœtus is not yet an independent

human being, and that every woman, by virtue of the right over her own body, is entitled to decide whether it shall become an independent human being. At a Women's Congress in the autumn of 1905, a resolution was passed demanding that abortion should only be punishable when effected by another person against the wish of the pregnant woman herself.[1]

Elisabeth Zanzinger argued that, "Just as it is a woman's private right, and most intimate concern, to present her virginity as her best gift to the chosen of her heart, so it is certainly a pregnant woman's own private concern if, for reasons which seem good to her, she decides to destroy the results of her action." A woman who destroys the embryo which might become a burden to the community, or is likely to be an inferior member of society, she urged, is doing a service to the community, which ought to reward her, perhaps by granting her special privileges as regards the upbringing of her other children. Oda Olberg considered that most of the women who terminate their pregnancies artificially would only have produced undesirables, for the normal, healthy, robust woman has no desire to effect abortion. "There are women who are psychically sterile, without being physically so, and who possess nothing of motherhood but the ability to bring forth. These, when they abort, are simply correcting a failure of Nature." She concluded that society must protect the young life in every way. "But we need no law to protect the young creature against its own mother."

The lawyers speedily came to the assistance of the women in this matter, the more readily, no doubt, since the traditions of the greatest and most influential body of law already pointed, on one side at all events, in the same direction. It may, indeed, be claimed that it was from the side of law—and in Italy, once the classic land of legal reform—that this new movement first begun. In 1888, Balestrini published his *Aborto*, in which he argued that the penalty should be removed from abortion; a very able and learned book, inspired by large ideas and a humanitarian spirit.

In Germany lawyers have advocated, more or less completely, the abolition of the punishment for abortion. So distinguished an authority as Von Liszt stated that he regards the punishment of abortion as "very doubtful," though he considered its complete abolition impracticable; abortion might be permitted during the early months of pregnancy, thus bringing about a return of the old view.[2]

[1] It may be noted that in England the attachment of any penalty at all to abortion, practised in the early months of pregnancy (before "quickening" has taken place), is merely a modern innovation.

[2] In a recent stimulating and suggestive little book, *Abortion*, the three possible attitudes to the procedure are presented by Stella Browne, A. M. Ludovici, and Dr. Harry Roberts. The first writer pleads for the legislation of unrestricted

The medical profession, which took the first step in modern times in the authorization of abortion, has not at present taken any further step. It has been content to lay down the principle that when the interests of the mother are opposed to those of the fœtus, it is the latter which must be sacrificed. It has hesitated to take the further step of placing abortion on the eugenic basis, and of claiming the right to insist on abortion whenever the medical and hygienic interests of society demand such a step. This attitude is perfectly intelligible. Medicine has in the past been chiefly identified with the saving of lives, even of worthless and worse than worthless lives; "Keep everything alive! Keep everything alive!" nervously cried Sir James Paget. Medicine has confined itself to the humble task of attempting to cure evils, and is only beginning to undertake the larger and nobler task of preventing them.

There can be no doubt that, as is often pointed out, the younger generation of medical men in England to-day no longer regard the induction of abortion as always an evil, and the penalties seem to them, as a distinguished medical officer of health has put it, "preposterous." The same is true in the United States. But in both countries the medical profession is puzzled by the absurdities and inconsistency of the still prevailing laws and at variance as to the right attitude to take up. In England abortion is only legal after the seventh month of pregnancy has been passed and in order to save the life of the mother (nothing about preserving the mother's health), so that, as a distinguished professor of midwifery has truly stated, the British law leaves the matter "in a most unsatisfactory condition and imposes unnecessary hardship upon the medical profession," which is placed, almost compulsorily, in the position of "flirting with illegal practices." Some doctors of repute and position feel free to carry out abortion whenever they think it desirable in the patient's interest, in spite of the risk that they run. Others are, as they admit, so timid about perhaps being termed "abortionists," that they do not induce abortion even when they feel it is strictly necessary. But, as they realize, a husband will very severely criticize a practitioner who allows a pregnancy to continue at the risk of endangering his wife's future health, and the mother of five or six children may bring weighty arguments against increasing the family. By refusing to interfere the doctor encourages her to risk not only her health but her life by resorting to illicit practices. In the United States the subject is still

abortion at the discretion of the woman; the second is entirely opposed to abortion; the third favours a modification of the law permitting abortion in special cases. In the United States Dr. A. J. Rongy, in an ably written book, *Abortion: Legal or Illegal?* (1933), advocates radical changes in the law, and Professor Taussig of St. Louis, has in his *Abortion, Spontaneous and Induced* (1936) produced the most important and comprehensive monograph on the whole subject.

more complicated and uncertain, for there are all sorts of laws in the different States, "often," Taussig tells us, "confused in their wording and illogical in the penalties inflicted."

In both countries the individual doctor is acutely aware, not merely of the risks to himself of the existing laws, but of the far-ranging misery, suffering, and death they inflict on the whole nation. It is more and more becoming the duty of medicine to go beyond the mere cure of the individual to deal with the health of the nation. If the medical profession stood together on this question and voiced, as they reasonably may, the new morality of the nation, ancient legal abuses would be swept away and a great step forward be taken. Parliaments are entitled to give authority to the new developments of national morality. But they are never competent to lay down medical procedures and always make a muddle of it.

The reasonable solution, and that which Taussig considers public opinion is approaching, is that abortion may be induced by any regular medical practitioner in consultation with another, and carried out in a licensed hospital of the State. When two regular practitioners give evidence of its necessity it should not be open to question.

There is at all events one large and important country where, even though not permanently, the law making abortion criminal had been practically abolished. In Soviet Russia it was found after the Revolution of 1917 that illegal abortion in unskilled hands was so common, and the maternal morbidity and mortality so appalling, that in 1920 the Government authorized the operation, provided it was carried out by medical practitioners and in public hospitals, after application previously made to a representative board, abortion by unauthorized persons remaining a crime. In one year following, a quarter of a million abortions were carried out, mostly on women who already had several children. This led to a notable diminution in maternal morbidity and mortality. More recently (1937), with the desire to increase the population, already growing rapidly, this decree has been abolished, and abortion again made punishable, with the result, it is anticipated, of greatly encouraging mischievous illicit practices.

We see that, alike on the side of practice and of theory, a great change has taken place during recent years in the attitude towards abortion. It must, however, be recognized that, unlike the control of procreation by methods for the prevention of conception, the movement for abortion is rather to make it sometimes permissible than to encourage it. Our morality is here reasonable.[1] An unrestricted permission for women to practise abortion in their own interests, or even for communities to practise it in the interests of the race, would be to reach beyond the stage of civilization we have at

[1] Even Balestrini, while opposed to the punishment of abortion, was no advocate of it as a social custom.

present attained. As Ellen Key argued, a civilization which permits, without protest, the barbarous slaughter of its carefully selected adults in war has not yet won the right to destroy deliberately even its most inferior vital products in the womb. A civilization guilty of so reckless a waste of life cannot safely be entrusted with this judicial function. The blind and aimless anxiety to cherish the most hopeless and degraded forms of life, even of unborn life, may well be a weakness, and, since it often leads to incalculable suffering, even a crime. But as yet there is a barrier against progress in this direction. Before we are entitled to take life deliberately for the sake of purifying life, we must learn how to preserve it by abolishing such destructive influences —war, disease, bad industrial conditions—as are easily within our social power as civilized nations.

There is, further, another consideration which seems to carry weight. The progress of civilization is in the direction of greater foresight, of greater prevention, of a diminished need for struggling with the reckless lack of prevision. The necessity for abortion is precisely one of those results of reckless action which civilization tends to diminish. While we may admit that in a sounder state of civilization cases might still occur when the induction of abortion would be desirable, it seems probable that the number of such cases will decrease rather than increase. In order to do away with the need for abortion, and to counteract the propaganda in its favour, our main reliance must be placed, on the one hand, on increased foresight in the determination of conception and increased knowledge of the means for preventing conception, and on the other hand, on a better provision by the State for the care of pregnant women, married and unmarried alike, and a practical recognition of the qualified mother's claim on society. There can be little doubt that, in many a charge of criminal abortion, the real offence lies at the door of those who have failed to exercise their social and professional duty of making known the more natural and harmless methods for preventing conception, or else by their social attitude have made the pregnant woman's position intolerable. By active social reform in these two directions, the new movement in favour of abortion may be kept in check, and it may even be found that by stimulating such reform that movement has been beneficial.

We have seen that the deliberate restraint of conception has become a part of our civilized morality, and that the practice and theory of facultative abortion has gained a footing among us. There remains a third and yet more radical method of controlling procreation, the method of preventing the possibility of procreation altogether by sterilization. The other two methods only affect a single act of union or its results, but sterilization affects all subsequent acts of sexual union and usually destroys the procreative power permanently.

Sterilization in its primitive form of castration, for various social and other purposes, is an ancient and widespread practice, carried out on men and on animals. There has, however, been on the whole a certain prejudice against it when applied to men in this primitive form. Many peoples have attached a very sacred value to the integrity of the sexual organs. Among some primitive peoples the removal of these organs has been regarded as a peculiarly ferocious insult, only to be carried out in moments of great excitement, as after a battle. Medicine was opposed to any interference with the sexual organs. The oath taken by the Greek physicians appears to prohibit castration as well as all other surgery: "I will not cut." In modern times, when sterilization no longer involves the removal of any organ, a great change has taken place. And during recent years it has been invoked in the cause of negative eugenics, to a greater extent, indeed, on account of its more radical character, than either the prevention of conception or abortion.

The movement in favour of castration appears to have begun in the United States. It was first advocated merely as a punishment for criminals, and especially sexual offenders. From this point of view, however, it was unsatisfactory and perhaps illegitimate. In many cases it might be no punishment at all, and indeed a positive benefit. In other cases, when inflicted against the subject's will, it might produce very disturbing mental effects, especially in already degenerate or unbalanced persons.

Eugenic considerations, which were later brought forward, constituted a sounder argument for the procedure, in this case carried out, by no means in order to inflict a barbarous and degrading punishment, but, with the subject's consent, in order to protect the community from the risk of useless or mischievous members.

Towards the end of the last century sterilization—still sometimes in the form of castration—became increasingly advocated for eugenic ends, especially in the United States, but elsewhere also, as by Rentoul in England, by Näcke in Germany, and by Zuccarelli in Italy. It began to be clear also that the method to be adopted was in men vasectomy or the severance of the vas deferens, and in women salpingectomy (section of the Fallopian tubes) which is a much more serious operation as it involves opening the abdomen.

This movement rapidly gained ground, and in 1905 at the annual meeting of Swiss alienists it was unanimously agreed that the sterilization of the insane is desirable, and it was in fact carried out. It is in Switzerland, indeed, that the first steps were taken in Europe to carry out this measure of social prophylaxis. The sixteenth yearly report (1907) of the Cantonal asylum at Wil describes four cases, two in men and two in women, performed—with the permission of the patients and the civil authorities—for social reasons; both women

had previously had illegitimate children who were a burden on the community, and all four patients were sexually abnormal; the operation enabled the patients to be liberated and to work, and the results were considered in every respect satisfactory to all concerned.

This year, 1907, is indeed memorable in the history of eugenic sterilization, for in the same year sterilization began to be discussed in the German Reichstag and in America actually to be enacted by the State of Indiana where, indeed, it had already been carried out during eight years on prisoners by the pioneering initiative of Dr. Harry Sharp.

It was about the same time that the procedure began to be adopted, quite apart from eugenic considerations, as a permanent contraceptive. I published particulars of the first case known to me, an American professional man, somewhat prominent in public life, in 1910. Some years previously, at the age of thirty, having already as many children as he was able to provide for, and finding that preventive measures were becoming increasingly irksome to his wife and himself, he had consulted a physician, and after full assurances, and mature deliberation with his wife, he underwent vasectomy, finding it a simple operation which did not interfere with work for a single day or cause serious disturbance, though a suspendsory bandage was needed for a few weeks. "The operation," he wrote, "has proved a complete success in every way. Sexual functions are *absolutely unaffected in any way whatsoever*. There is no sense of discomfort or uneasiness in the sexual tract, and what seems strangest of all to me, is the fact that the 'semen,' so far as one can judge by ordinary means of observation, is undiminished in quantity and unchanged in character. My wife is delighted at having fear banished from our love, and, taken all in all, it certainly seems as if life would mean more to us both. Incidentally, the health of both of us seems better than usual, particularly so in my wife's case, and this she attributes to a soothing influence that is attained by allowing the seminal fluid to be deposited in a perfectly normal manner. This operation being comparatively new, and, as yet, not often done on others than the insane, criminal, etc., I thought it might be of interest to you. If I shed even the faintest ray of light on this greatest of all human problems, I shall be glad indeed." Thirty years later, feeling that he ought to make public the pioneering way in which he had solved ("with a result far exceeding my hopes or dreams") one of the commonest problems of to-day, he wrote an account of it (*Physical Culture*, June, 1934). "I wish to do everything in my power," he wrote, "towards destroying utterly the almost universally held idea that surgical sterilization of the adult man produces distressing changes. Age sixty finds me vigorous, with every zest in life entirely unabated." He adds "My children are all parents and proud and happy in that fact, though

each of them knew, before marriage, of the step I had taken." Since this case first came to my knowledge, I have heard of others, English and American, who report similarly satisfactory results, and I know of a large number of persons, usually men, who for one reason or another find sterilization desirable, but difficult to obtain on account of the timidity of surgeons who fear that, unless effected for some quite serious pathological reason, the operation might be regarded as illegal. It never has been adjudged illegal in any British Court, and it is only on the legal aptitude to find quibbles, and by farcical perversions of antiquated laws, that some lawyers rely for this argument. Certainly sterilization by a surgeon has never been declared legal by statute, but neither has haircutting by a hairdresser, yet voluntary decapillation is not criminal though it may be when compulsory.

The increased interest in the subject, however, led to the appointment by the Government of a Departmental Committee on Sterilization, which called much highly qualified evidence on the subject. The Report of this Committee (commonly called the Brock Committee after its chairman), issued in 1934, attracted wide attention at home and abroad, where it has been described as probably the most careful presentation of eugenics from the State's point of view ever produced. It unanimously approved of legislation to enable voluntary sterilization to be carried out on defectives and those likely to transmit mental or physical defects, males or females, and was opposed to this being done in an institution as likely to discredit the operation. The Eugenics Society, already actively concerned with the problem (and in favour of applying the procedure not only to persons manifesting defects but, if possible, to the "carriers" of defects), at once took up this suggestion and made attempts to introduce into Parliament a Bill to legalize voluntary sterilization, but these attempts have always been squashed immediately on the most futile pretexts. A Bill, not to *legalize*, but to *encourage*, the use of sterilization in any case deemed suitable by a surgeon supported by the certificates of two independent medical practitioners, would have been reasonable and possibly less likely to arouse British susceptibilities. Unfortunately, the Eugenics Society (even with the support of its own legal adviser) assumed, without any sound grounds, that the Brock Committee was correct in taking for granted the illegality of sterilization. Nor has the medical profession raised any concerted protest, although in a allied field, obstetricians and gynæcologists are painfully aware of the muddle Parliament has made of abortion laws and the evils that have resulted.[1] Parliament may be trusted to make reasonable decisions on those large matters of principle which involve truisms,

[1] This does not merely apply to medicine. Sir Ambrose Fleming has pointed out how the history of telegraphy, of wireless, of telephony, and of electric lighting has illustrated the evils of premature legislation.

but when highly technical problems like those of medicine are at stake, we should do well always to remember the warning of one of the wisest of Englishmen, and greatest of administrators, Lord Cromer, that there was nothing he feared so much "as the folly and ignorance of Parliament."[1]

English traditions are in general opposed to the interference of Parliament in social and technical details and fearful alike of bureaucratic interference and class oppression. So that the leading scientific journal, *Nature,* was justified in stating that while the Brock Report "heralds a new era," sterilization in England "in all probability will not gain the support of the law," or, if it does, be so tied up in red tape as to be unworkable. Sterilization will make little progress with such support. When the Brock Report came before the London County Council one member thought that sterilization would mean experiment on the poor; another thought mental deficiency was probably not hereditary but environmental; and the Labour Leader, Mr. Herbert Morrison, said we had no right to use the public services to tamper with human beings, though he failed to add that such "tampering" was the proper business of medicine. So the Council decided to "express no opinion." In Parliament the opinions actually expressed on the matter were even further astray but equally negative.[2]

In countries where a different tradition prevails we find that in this matter—however it may be in other matters—there is less objection to making laws, even if sometimes very unsatisfactory laws, where sterilization is concerned. The most conspicuous example is that of Nazi Germany, where on January 1st, 1934, a law came into effect to promote the "biological health" of the German people by the sterilization of defectives. This law has not usually been understood on account of a natural reaction to the intolerant and violent Nazi policy in general. It has been confounded with the "Nordic" and Anti-Semitic efforts of the German Government. It is, however, on a quite independent foundation, and, if properly administered, it has no relation to "Aryan" aspirations. It appears that, long before developing his later racial ideas, Hitler had, when in prison, read and been greatly impressed by the German work on *Human Heredity* of Baur, Fischer, and Lenz (also translated into

[1] A special committee set up by the Government of New Zealand in 1937 decided that there is no bar to the performance of sterilization when in accord with general medical opinion, and they saw no reason to recommend any change. They were of the same opinion as regards abortion. This seems the sound attitude.

[2] An admirable presentation of the matter from the standpoint of the Eugenics Society will be found in Dr. C. P. Blacker's *Voluntary Sterilization,* 1934. A popular presentation is *The Case for Sterilization,* by Leon Whitney, 1935. A comprehensive survey of the whole subject in its various aspects is Dr. J. H. Landman's *Human Sterilization* (1932).

English), a standard work of genuine scientific character, and, though now somewhat out of date, once described as "epoch-making." In his *Mein Kampf*, written at this time, Hitler emphasized the importance of procreation by persons sound of body and mind, and the immense prevention of suffering and increased human welfare which would result from shutting out defectives from procreation; he believed that this beneficial end might be attained in six hundred, or at all events, a thousand years. In the carefully framed law, which ultimately resulted, no doctrine of racial superiority was involved. The law—which an American observer describes as "framed with more clearly defined motives for the relief of human misery and the increase of human happiness" than the statute books of any other nation can show—enables anyone suffering from hereditary disease which might be transmitted to offspring (or his guardian) to apply voluntarily, with a physician's certificate, for permission to be sterilized. In some cases, however, the procedure may be carried out without the subject's consent. (This feature of the law has been condemned by the leading German eugenic authority, Professor Muckermann, in his *Eugenik*.) After preliminary examination at the District Health Office, the application, if approved, is passed on to the special Eugenics Court, which, in private sessions, investigates the case thoroughly. The Court is made up of a magistrate as chairman, a public health officer, and a physician familiar with the principles of heredity. It may be three months before a decision is reached. Persons confined in institutions do not come under the law. The operation must be performed in a hospital, but not by the physician who signed the application nor by any member of the Court. The cost is covered by the patient's insurance, if insured, or else by the State. All reasonable precautions are thus taken. During the first year there were over 84,000 applications, the sexes almost equally divided; of these over 8,000 were refused or withdrawn. The operation of the law has been investigated on the spot by competent American observers who reached very favourable conclusions.[1]

The disapproval of the Pope in recent years has stood in the way of a religious adoption of sterilization. This is an altogether modern attitude. In former ages, sterilization, in its most serious and objectional form of castration, was accepted under some conditions by some of the greatest theologians, even Aquinas. In 1927, Dr. Joseph Mayer, a distinguished theologian, in his valuable work on the subject, *Gesetzliche Unfruchtbarmachung Geisteskranker*, published with ecclesiastical approval, held that the Church accepted sterilization as desirable in suitable cases. He duly refers to the well-known fact that, for centuries, indeed until the early nineteenth century, castration was

[1] See, for instance, *Journal of Heredity*, July, 1934, and *Physical Culture*, November, 1936.

practised to preserve the youthful voices of the singers in the Pope's own private chapel. But this neutral attitude has been superseded by the Papal encyclical *Casti Connubii* in 1930, which held sterilization to be only permissible to safeguard the life or health of the patient himself. The Nazi Government has accepted this attitude and does not regard any Catholic as liable to sterilization so long as he remains in an institution at the expense of his family or the Church.

It is in the United States that voluntary sterilization was first and most firmly established by legislative encouragement, and especially in California, though it was Indiana which, in 1907, passed the first law. Mr. E. S. Gosney, a far-sighted and generous lawyer on the Pacific, with the co-operation of Dr. Popenoe, a biologist, were chiefly influential in putting the movement in California on a firm foundation.[1]

There was much opposition at first. That, indeed, was inevitable, since sterilization proceeds from the ancient and mutilating operation of castration which was of old, and indeed up to the beginning of the present century, advocated as a punishment, especially for sexual offenders. "Cruel and unusual punishments" are in many States justly prohibited by law. Modern sterilization, however, is not cruel, and is not advocated as a punishment. It is not compulsory, and is frequently desired by the subject. At least sixty-six different laws have been enacted in the various United States Legislatures, and many of them found unworkable, as Parliamentary efforts in such a matter are always liable to be, while some, on more or less unreasonable grounds, have been declared "Unconstitutional." But at least twenty-seven of the States now legally practise sterilization, and in some of the other States sterilization, when considered desirable, is carried out in hospitals or by private medical practitioners; Dr. H. H. Laughlin's *Eugenical Sterilization in the United States*, an authoritative work, detailed and comprehensive (first published in 1922), by the Director of the Eugenics Record Office, has had a wide influence in guiding legislation in this matter—if legislation there must be—along sound lines.

It may not be possible to view sterilization as a method of negative eugenics with enthusiasm. The recklessness, moreover, with which it was sometimes proposed to apply it by law—owing no doubt to the fact that it is not so obviously repulsive as the less radical procedure of abortion—ought to render us cautious. We must, too, dismiss the idea of sterilization as a punishment; as such it is not merely barbarous but degrading and is unlikely to have a beneficial effect.

[1] The character and progress of sterilization in California is set forth by E. S. Gosney and Paul Popenoe, *Sterilization for Human Betterment* (1929), a widely influential work, also by Popenoe and Johnson, *Applied Eugenics* (1933), as well as in numerous articles appearing from time to time in the *Journal of Social Hygiene*, and other American periodicals.

As a method of negative eugenics it should never be carried out except with the subject's consent. The fact that in some cases it is necessary to enforce seclusion in its absence is doubtless a fact exerting influence in favour of such consent; but the consent is essential. A man who has felt degraded and embittered by an enforced sterilization might not be dangerous to posterity, but might easily become a dangerous member of the society in which he actually lived. With the precautions and safeguards due to enlightened public opinion, sterilization may doubtless play a certain part in the elevation and improvement of the race.

The question of sterilization leads us on to another question—though allied, quite distinct—which is beginning to gain wide support: the question of euthanasia. We are beginning to accept the necessity of sterilization, primarily for the benefit of the race and secondarily for the benefit of the individual. Here we are concenred with a benefit which, though secondarily for the benefit of the race, is primarily to save suffering to the individual, and to those most nearly connected with him. In our civilization, as must sometimes happen in any social system, individuals may come into the world unfit to live a human life save at the cost of endless suffering, and still more frequently towards the end of life innumerable individuals enter a final and sometimes prolonged state of helpless suffering in which they become a source of pain to themselves and often still more to the friends who seek to surround them with love and sympathy. From a strictly reasonable standpoint there is not the slightest doubt that the best and most merciful course in all such cases, and for all concerned, is to bring life to a speedy and painless end.[1] But before the recognition of this can become general there are two sets of obstacles—on the one side prejudices and on the other side emotions—which have to be overcome. All our prejudices, and that is notably so in the medical profession, are in favour of the preservation of life altogether, apart from whether or not the life is worth preserving. All our emotions also are in the same direction; to kill anyone we love, however obviously it may be the kindest thing we can do, remains repugnant. There is, moreover, a fundamental legal distinction between sterilization and euthanasia. The former is carried out in the absence of any law authorizing it; the latter, it is agreed, cannot publicly be carried out without legal authorization. In a few recent cases, in which relatives were killed from merciful motives, even though the punishments inflicted were mild, the necessity of legal procedure was generally admitted.

There is now a definite and influential movement for the legal

[1] The various attractive ways in which this could be carried out have been fantastically described by Wicksteed Armstrong in a chapter on the Garden of Euthanasia of his Utopian book, *Paradise Discovered.*

recognition of euthanasia. The initial step was largely due to a distinguished Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Killick Millard, and in 1934 the Voluntary Euthanasia Legislation Society began to be formed, with Dr. Millard as honorary secretary, and Lord Moynihan, one of the most eminent surgeons of his time, as President. The first annual meeting was held in 1937. Lord Moynihan had, in the interval, died, and was succeeded by a President, not this time of the medical world, distinguished in movements of social reform, Lord Ponsonby. He was supported by many of eminence in medicine, law, the churches, the sciences, literature and the arts, who were willing to take up the question of " the right to die." The object of the Society is to educate public opinion and to introduce into Parliament a Bill to legalize euthanasia. This Bill was first introduced, in the House of Lords, in 1936 by Lord Ponsonby and, though unsuccessfully, with encouraging results. The most distinguished opponents were Lord Dawson, Lord Horder, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, but it is notable that they were all three really sympathetic. Lord Dawson was simply opposed to the Bill and not to the principle ; he held that both medical and lay opinion were growing favourable to " the feeling that one should make the act of dying more gentle and more peaceful even if it does involve curtailments of the length of life." His objection to the Bill was simply that " there are many things which had better evolve before statute law tries to give them expression." Lord Horder's attitude was somewhat similar ; he felt great practical difficulties in working the Bill. The Archbishop, without bringing forward any religious objections, admitted the " extreme cases where it is morally legitimate to shorten a life of pain," but he took the attitude that this should be left to be dealt with by the medical profession, and not dragged into the open and regulated by elaborate official procedure. There can be no doubt that the principle of euthanasia will become generally recognized. But legal recognition is here essential.

The methods we have been considering, in so far as they limit the procreative powers of the less healthy and efficient stocks in a community, are methods of eugenics. It must not, however, be supposed that they are the whole of eugenics, or indeed that they are in any way essential to a eugenic scheme. Eugenics is concerned with the whole of the agencies which elevate and improve the human breed ; abortion and sterilization are methods which may be used to this end, but they are not methods of which everyone yet approves, nor is it always clear that the ends they effect would not better be attained by other methods ; in any case they are methods of negative eugenics. There remains the field of positive eugenics, which is concerned, not with the elimination of the inferior stocks, but with ascertaining which are the superior stocks and with furthering their procreative power.

The question of eugenics, the question of the limitation of progeny by whatever method, and the question of the future population of the world have all been agitated, and in the most contrary directions, alike in the past and in the present. We may hope that sane views are beginning to prevail in all these matters. Eugenics is really as old as man, and perhaps, as I have suggested, older. The day has gone by when it was permissible to refer to it as "a hopelessly perverted movement."[1]

Some aspects of the sterilization question, also, especially in its application to mental defectives, have aroused a controversy which we may hope is beginning to be seen as absurd. Mental deficiency is so serious a disqualification for life in our complex civilization that there has been a wide-felt anxiety to prevent the propagation of those who manifest it and might pass it on to their offspring. No one whose opinion counts supposes that mental deficiency could by this measure alone be stamped out. We know that there are "carriers" of mental defect, not themselves defective, but liable to produce children that are. The "carriers" also would have to be sterilized, and, needless to say, our genetic knowledge does not at present enable us to deal with them. If, however, as some reactionaries argue, we should throw away sterilization because it will not achieve everything, we should be flinging aside one of the hopes of human progress. Even those geneticists, however, who fail to be enthusiastic over the sterilization of mental defectives admit that, in a thousand years, the present 300,000 feeble-minded in the United States, for instance, could be reduced to some 35,000, even by limiting sterilization to obvious outright defectives. What an enormous gain! Hitler, who could not claim to be a geneticist, estimates that it may take a thousand years for such favourable results to be reached through the operation of his sterilization law.

It must be realized also that sterilization, even if it were confined to mental defectives, would thus exercise an immense beneficial social influence altogether apart from the question of the heredity of

[1] This is, however, the description of eugenics by Professor H. J. Muller in a recent for the most part admirable and pioneering work which cannot be too widely read, *Out of the Night*, and he imagines that its "atrocities" favour race and class prejudice and all sorts of evil things. But, fortunately, in the course of his work, it comes out that he is himself a eugenist, and along the best lines, those of "the conscious social direction of human biological evolution," which Galton, who invented the term, advocated. Others beside Prof. Muller have thought it necessary to protest against the foolish abuse of eugenical ideas. Thus, ten years previously, Prof. East in his *Mankind at the Cross-roads* declared that "a one-sided ill-considered eugenics has been a veritable honey-pot for the dilettante and the amateur," so that he has himself sometimes hesitated to use the term "eugenics"; yet, as he goes on to say, "the cause is fundamentally good," and he shows himself to be a thorough-going eugenist. Similarly, Margaret Sanger, in her *Pivot of Civilization*, distinguishes between bad eugenics and good eugenics.

the conditions. As Tredgold, a leading authority, showed thirty years ago, propagation by the mentally defective, carried out under the worst possible conditions, is in itself "both a terrible and extensive evil." It is strange indeed that this could be questioned.

There is no subject which appeals so much to those who are neurasthenically or temperamentally alarmists as the population question, that is to say, the awful danger of a population either too large for the world to hold, or too small to hold the world. It is a perfectly legitimate question, and of great interest. The trouble is that the alarmist, however soundly he bases his arguments about the future on the experience of the present, can have no knowledge of the degree to which present experience will extend. It has never in any age been possible. Man has passed through all stages of population since the first family of anthropoids descended from their trees to live on the earth as human beings, or, as the old Hebrews symbolically expressed it, since Noah and his family came down out of the Ark. We may reasonably assume that the social organization of man's life—that is to say a life, however comparatively primitive, under conditions more or less like our own—has been going on for perhaps a hundred thousand years. During that period, to a couple of centuries ago, the population, owing to the strict prevalence everywhere of more or less eugenic methods of control,[1] increased with extreme slowness. We cannot fix on any period when what may be regarded as an optimum population was reached. It is only in our seventeenth century that we begin to estimate roughly the number of the world's inhabitants. According to one competent estimate, the population of the world at the middle of the seventeenth century was between four and five hundred millions ; according to another estimate on somewhat different grounds it was between five and six hundred millions, not a serious discrepancy. Yet it is now considered to be over two thousand millions, that is a more than four-fold increase, in the extremely brief space of three centuries with the most rapid increase, still continuing, during the last one hundred years.

It is possible to glimpse some of the causes which led to this abnormal and disturbing exaltation of human reproductivity. It was indeed the result of that increased conquest of the environment in which, it has been hitherto said, all "progress" consists. It had become possible to gain greater control over the means of subsistence and so diminish the destructive outbreaks of famine, while in another direction the revolution in industry, with its constantly growing demands for more hands, was replacing the old predominantly agricultural order in which the demand for new workers is limited and slow. At the same time, in yet another direction, new discoveries in sanitation, hygiene,

[1] I may here again refer to Carr-Saunders' comprehensive and important work, *The Population Problem.*

and medical science, by decreasing or altogether abolishing the ancient devastating epidemics and by improved health measures preserving the lives of individuals, immensely increased the pace of population growth in most parts of the world. At the same time, also, the humanitarian spirit associated with these movements inevitably tended to sweep away the old established eugenic checks restricting the increase of population, which indeed now seemed no longer necessary. But it soon began to be realized that the new rate of increase could not go on long without bringing terrible trouble on the world, and that it really was possible to foresee a measurable period when, at that rate, for any further increase the earth would afford "standing room only." In 1923 Prof. E. M. East, a distinguished sociologist, qualified for his task by a versatile acquaintance with the various related sciences, produced a notable work, *Mankind at the Crossroads*, based on the population growth of the period and clearly analysing and expounding its inevitable results if that rate continued. According to the best statisticians there was a yearly increase in the world's population of nearly twenty millions, a rate that in 1,800 years would produce from a single couple the actual population which had taken some 100,000 years to produce. The saturation point at this rate would even at a conservative estimate be reached in less than a century, so that persons already living might still be here to witness "a world filled with people without faith or hope, a seething mass of discontented humanity, struggling for mere existence." East felt the time had come "to call a halt." The halt has since then been called. But so far it has only imperfectly been called, and by no means always obeyed, so that East's book remains full of instruction, even though now, with our increased food productivity, in some respects out of date.

But the situation has sufficed to give a new and opposite cry to the alarmists. The terrors of under-population are replacing the terrors of over-population. Instead of the lack of ground to stand on, it is the lack of people to stand on it that is now lamented. We need only read Dr. Enid Charles's able little book, *The Twilight of Parenthood.*[1]

We are still, however, too near the old alarmists to take the new alarmists very seriously. Moreover, they both alike found themselves on the fallacy of taking the population rate of the day as the population rate for ever and ever. And they have against them, what the old alarmists could claim as a support for alarm, the deep biological urge to parenthood. It is a childish and unsupported fancy that cars and cinemas are replacing the desire for babies. What has happened is that parents, as never before, are learning the necessity of deliberate and planned parenthood. If that parenthood is to be

[1] The latest relative facts and information may be found in a text-book by Dr. Kuczynski, *Population Movements* (1936).

increased, there is no need for increase in the desire for children, but great need for increase in the conditions that render children desirable. The conditions of work and pay and taxation and housing which make parenthood difficult and often impossible are conditions that have to be changed if parenthood is in need of increase. Those who think there is such a need, moreover, are usually moved by a more or less camouflaged desire for cannon-fodder. They forget, at the same time, that women to-day are more intelligently informed and possess a greater sense of responsibility than ever before. Women are inclined to think twice about having a child at a time when it is being dinned into their ears that even when still a baby that child should be provided with a gas mask as a probably ineffective protection against poison gases of ever-increasing virulence, and may have to live beneath a concrete roof of ever-increasing thickness as a shelter against ever more powerful bombs. If our alarmists were a little more intelligent they would come out of their mathematical laboratories and exert their energies towards the substitution for the antiquated method of warfare of more civilized methods of settling disputes.

The population of the world, notably in some regions, is still, however, on the side of increase. There is, indeed, much to be said for a relatively stationary population, and the dangers of a reduced population are speculative. In any case, restraint from procreation is no longer a bar to marriage. Yet the question of whether two persons ought to marry each other still remains in the majority of cases a serious question from the standpoint of positive as well as of negative eugenics, for the normal marriage cannot fail to involve children as, indeed, its chief and most desirable end. We have to consider not merely what are the stocks or the individuals that are unfit to breed, but also what are the stocks or individuals that are most fit to breed, and under what conditions procreation may best be effected. The present imperfection of our knowledge on these questions emphasizes the need for care and caution in approaching their consideration.

There have been premature attempts at practice. It may be fitting to refer to the experiment of the Oneida Community in establishing a system of scientific propagation, under the guidance of a man whose ability and distinction as a pioneer are only to-day beginning to be adequately recognized. John Humphrey Noyes (born in 1811) was too far ahead of his own day to be recognized at his true worth ; at the most, he was regarded as the sagacious and successful founder of a sect, and his attempts to apply eugenics to life only aroused ridicule and persecution, so that he was compelled, largely by outside pressure, to bring a most instructive experiment to a premature end. His aim and principle are set forth in an *Essay on Scientific Propagation*, printed some seventy years ago, which discusses problems that are

only now beginning to attract the attention of the practical man, as within the range of social politics. When Noyes turned his vigorous and practical mind to the question of eugenics, that question was exclusively in the hands of scientific men, who felt all the natural timidity of the scientific man towards the realization of his proposals. The experiment of Noyes, at Oneida, marked a new stage in the history of eugenics; with Noyes the questions of eugenics passed beyond the purely academic stage in which, from the time of Plato, they had peacefully reposed. "It is becoming clear," Noyes states at the outset, "that the foundations of scientific society are to be laid in the scientific propagation of human beings." In doing this, we must attend to two things: blood (or heredity) and training; and he puts blood first. Here he revealed the breadth of his vision in comparison with the ordinary social reformer, who, in that day, was usually a fanatical believer in the influence of training and surroundings. Noyes sets forth the position of Darwin on the principles of breeding, and the step beyond Darwin which had been taken by Galton. He then remarks that, when Galton comes to the point where it is necessary to advance from theory to the duties the theory suggests, he "subsides into the meekest conservatism." (It must be remembered that this was written at an early stage in Galton's work.) This conclusion was entirely opposed to Noyes' practical and religious temperament. Noyes anticipated Galton in regarding eugenics as a matter of religion.

Noyes proposed to term the work of modern science in propagation "Stirpiculture," in which he has sometimes been followed by others. He considered that it is the business of the stirpiculturist to keep in view both quantity and quality of stocks, and he held that, without diminishing quantity, it was possible to raise the quality by exercising a stringent discrimination in selecting mates.

The two principles to be held in mind were, "Breed from the best," and "Breed in-and-in," with a cautious and occasional introduction of new strains. (It may be noted that Reibmayr, in his *Entwicklungsgeschichte des Genies und Talentes*, argues that the superior races, and superior individuals in the human species, have been produced by an unconscious adherence to exactly these principles.) "By segregating superior families, and by breeding these in-and-in, superior varieties of human being might be produced, which would be comparable to the thoroughbreds in all the domestic races."

Noyes finally criticizes the present method, or lack of method, in matters of propagation. Our marriage system, he states, "leaves mating to be determined by a general scramble." "We are safe every way in saying that there is no possibility of carrying the two precepts of scientific propagation into an institution which pretends to no discrimination, allows no suppression, gives no more liberty to the

best than to the worst, and which, in fact, must inevitably discriminate the wrong way, so long as the inferior classes are most prolific." In modifying our sexual institutions, Noyes insists, there must be no compulsion about human scientific propagation ; it must be autonomous, directed by self-government, " by the free choice of those who love science well enough to 'make themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake.' " The home, also, must be preserved, but it is necessary to enlarge it, for, " if all could learn to love other children than their own, there would be nothing to hinder scientific propagation in the midst of homes far better than any that now exist."

This memorable pamphlet contains no exposition of the precise measures adopted by the Oneida Community to carry out these principles. The two essential points were, as we know, " male continence " and the enlarged family, in which all the men were the actual or potential mates of all the women, but no union for propagation took place, except as the result of reason and deliberate resolve. It is not probable that the Oneida Community presented in detail the model to which human society generally will conform. But even at the lowest estimate, its success showed, as Lord Morley pointed out, " how modifiable are some of these facts of existing human character which are vulgarly deemed to be ultimate and ineradicable," and that " the discipline of the appetites and affections of sex," on which the future of civilization largely rests, is very far from an impossibility.

In many respects, the Oneida Community was ahead of its time, —and even of ours,—but it is interesting to note that, in the matter of the control of conception, our marriage system has come into line with the theory and practice of Oneida ; it cannot, indeed, be said that we always control conception in accordance with eugenic principles, but the fact that such control has now become a generally accepted habit of civilization, to some extent deprives Noyes' criticism of our marriage system of the force it once possessed.[1]

Perhaps the commonest type of proposal, or attempt, to improve the biological level of the race is by the exclusion of certain classes of degenerates from marriage, or by the encouragement of better classes of the community to marry. This seems to be, at present, the most

[1] Noyes was anticipated in theory by an Italian monk of genius, Campanella, in a much earlier century. Carrying on the Platonic tradition, in his *Citta del Sole*, Campanella pictured a community in which scientific procreation was effected in much the same way as at Oneida. Naked games were practised, which enabled defective individuals to be recognized, and a body of matrons under the direction of the Great Master, who was also a great physician, selected the tall and handsome men best fitted to mate with tall and beautiful women, also being careful to couple the lean with the fat. Coitus for pregnancy was distinguished from ordinary coitus and surrounded by more solemn ritual. Priests and learned men were considered relatively inapt for procreation on account of absorption in intellectual pursuits, so they had to observe special precautions and were united only to unusually vivacious and vigorous women.

popular form of eugenics, and in so far as it is not effected by compulsion but is the outcome of a voluntary resolve to treat the question of the creation of the race with the jealous care and guardianship which so tremendously serious, so godlike, a task involves, it has much to be said in its favour and nothing against it.

But it is quite another matter when the attempt is made to regulate such an institution as marriage by law. In the first place we do not yet know enough about the principles of heredity and the transmissibility of pathological states to enable us to formulate sound legislative proposals on this basis. The science of genetics is still in its infancy. Supposing, moreover, that our knowledge on all these questions were far more advanced than it is, we still should not have attained a position in which we could lay down general propositions regarding the desirability or the undesirability of encouraging certain classes of persons to procreate. The question is necessarily an individual question, not a class question, and it can only be decided when all the circumstances of the individual case have been fairly passed in review.

The objection to any legislative and compulsory regulation of the right to marry is, however, much more fundamental than the consideration that our knowledge is at present inadequate. It lies in the extraordinary confusion, in the minds of those who advocate such legislation, between legal marriage and procreation. The persons who fall into such confusion have not yet learnt the alphabet of the subject they presume to dictate about, and are no more competent to legislate than a child who cannot tell A from B is competent to read.

Marriage, in so far as it is the partnership for mutual help and consolation of two people who in such partnership are free, if they please, to exercise sexual union, is an elementary right of every person who is able to reason, who is guilty of no fraud or concealment, and who is not likely to injure the partner selected, for in that case society is entitled to interfere by virtue of its duty to protect its members. But the right to marry, thus understood, in no way involves the right to procreate. For while marriage *per se* only affects the two individuals concerned, and in no way affects the State, procreation, on the other hand, primarily affects the community which is ultimately made up of procreated persons, and only secondarily affects the two individuals who are the instruments of procreation. So that just as the individual couple has the first right in the question of marriage, the State has the first right in the question of procreation. The State is just as incompetent to lay down the law about marriage as the individual is to lay down the law about procreation.

That, however, is only one-half of the folly committed by those who would select the candidates for matrimony by statute. Let us suppose—as is not indeed easy to suppose—that a community will meekly accept the abstract prohibitions of the statute book and

quietly go home again when the registrar of marriages informs them that they are shut out from legal matrimony by the new table of prohibited degrees. An explicit prohibition to procreate within marriage is an implicit permission to procreate outside marriage. Thus the undesirable procreation, instead of being carried out under the least dangerous conditions, is carried out under the most dangerous conditions, and the net result to the community is not a gain but a loss.

What seems usually to happen, in the presence of a formal legislative prohibition against the marriage of a particular class, is a combination of various evils. In part the law becomes a dead letter, in part it is evaded by skill and fraud, in part it is obeyed to give rise to worse evils. This happened, for instance, in the Terek district of the Caucasus, where, on the demand of a medical committee, priests were prohibited from marrying persons among whose relatives or ancestry any cases of leprosy had occurred. So much and such various mischief was caused by this order that it was speedily withdrawn.[1]

If we remember that the Catholic Church was occupied for more than a thousand years in the task of imposing the prohibition of marriage on its priesthood—an educated and trained body of men, who had every spiritual and worldly motive to accept the prohibition, and were, moreover, brought up to regard asceticism as the best ideal in life—we may realize how absurd it is to attempt to gain the same end by mere casual prohibitions issued to untrained people with no motives to obey such prohibitions, and no ideals of celibacy.

The hopelessness and even absurdity of effecting the eugenic improvement of the race by merely placing on the statute book prohibitions to certain classes of people to enter the legal bonds of matrimony as at present constituted, reveals the weakness of those who undervalue the eugenic importance of environment. Those who affirm that heredity is everything and environment nothing seem strangely to forget that it is precisely the lower classes—those who are most subjected to the influence of bad environment—who procreate most copiously, most recklessly, and most disastrously. The restraint of procreation, and a concomitant regard for heredity, increase *pari passu* with improvement of the environment and rise in social well-being. If even already it can be said that probably 50 per cent. of sexual intercourse—perhaps the most procreatively productive moiety —takes place outside legal marriage, it becomes obvious that statutory prohibition to the unfit classes to refrain from legal marriage merely involves their joining the procreating classes outside legal matrimony. It is also clear that if we are to neglect the factor of environment, and leave the lower social classes to the ignorance and recklessness which are the result of their environment, the only practical method of

[1] This example was brought forward by Ledermann, "Skin Diseases and Marriage," in Senator and Kaminer, *Health and Disease in Relation to Marriage*.

eugenics left open is that by sterilization and abortion. But this method—if applied on a wholesale scale as it would need to be [1] and without reference to the consent of the individual—is entirely opposed to modern democratic feeling. Thus those short-sighted eugenists who overlook the importance of environment are overlooking the only practical channel through which their aims can be realized. Attention to heredity and attention to environment are not, as some have supposed, antagonistic, but they play harmoniously into each other's hands. The care for environment leads to a restraint on reckless procreation, and the restraint of procreation leads to improved environment.[2]

Legislation on marriage, to be effectual, must be enacted in the home, in the school, in the doctor's consulting room. Force is helpless here ; it is education that is needed, not merely instruction, but the education of the conscience and will, and the training of the emotions.

Legal action may come in to further this process of education, though it cannot replace it. Thus it is reasonable that when there has been a concealment of serious disease by a party to a marriage such concealment should be a ground for divorce. Epilepsy may be taken as typical of the diseases which should be a bar to procreation, and their concealment equivalent to an annulment of marriage. In the United States the Supreme Court of Errors of Connecticut laid it down in 1906 that the Superior Court has the power to pass a decree of divorce when one of the parties has concealed the existence of epilepsy, and this has been said to mark a forward step in human progress. Such deceit is now a ground for the annulment of marriage in various States. There are many other seriously pathological conditions in which divorce should be pronounced, or, indeed, occur automatically, except when procreation has been renounced, for in that case the State is no longer concerned in the relationship, except to punish any fraud committed by concealment.

[1] In England a vast number of applicants to the Navy are annually rejected, and although the physical requirements for enlistment in the Army are nowadays extremely moderate, it was estimated by General Maurice even before the Great War that at least 60 per cent. of recruits and would-be recruits are dismissed as unfit. It can scarcely be claimed that men who are not good enough for the Army are good enough for the great task of creating the future race.

[2] These words were written some thirty years ago, yet it is still necessary to insist that good seed is useless without good soil, and good soil useless without good seed. At one period, when heredity seemed a new discovery, it was sometimes preached as all-important ; to-day we often hear the opposite absurdity of the all-importance of environment. The genetic evidence for heredity remains clear. It is enough to refer to the decisive evidence furnished by the study of twins, and the comparison of the history of uniovular or identical twins with binovular or fraternal twins. I may mention, for instance, the careful and impartial investigations of Kurt Conrad on " Erbenlage und Epilepsie," published during 1936 and 1937. The sound doctrine of the importance alike of heredity and environment is clearly set forth in Dr. Julian Huxley's admirable Galton Lecture for 1936 (published by the *Eugenics Review* April, 1936). They are inseparable.

The demand that a medical certificate of health should be compulsory on marriage has been especially made in France. In 1858, Diday, of Lyons, proposed, indeed, that all persons, without exception, should be compelled to possess a certificate of health and disease, a kind of sanitary passport. The proposal has since been made in various States of Europe and America. As Ellen Key remarked, it is "just as necessary to demand medical testimony concerning capacity for marriage, as concerning capacity for military service. In the one case, it is a matter of giving life; in the other, of taking it, although certainly the latter occasion has hitherto been considered as much the more serious."

The certificate, as usually advocated, would be a private but necessary legitimation of the marriage in the eyes of the civil and religious authorities. Such a step, being required for the protection alike of the conjugal partner and of posterity, would involve a new legal organization of the matrimonial contract. That such demands are so frequently made is a significant sign of the growth of moral consciousness in the community, and it is good that the public should be made acquainted with the urgent need for them. But it is undesirable that they should, at present, or, perhaps, ever, be embodied in legal codes. What is needed is the cultivation of the feeling of individual responsibility, and the development of social antagonism towards those individuals who fail to recognize their responsibility. It is the reality of marriage, and not its mere legal forms, that it is necessary to act upon.

The voluntary method is the only sound way of approach in this matter. Duclaux considered that the candidate for marriage should possess a certificate of health in much the same way as the candidate for life assurance, the question of professional secrecy, as well as that of compulsion, no more coming into one question than into the other. There is no reason why such certificates, of an entirely voluntary character, should not become customary among those persons who are sufficiently enlightened to realize all the grave personal, family, and social issues involved in marriage. The system of eugenic certification, as originated and developed by Galton, might constitute a valuable instrument for raising the moral consciousness in this matter. Galton's eugenic certificates would deal mainly with the natural virtues of superior hereditary breed—"the public recognition of a natural nobility"—but they would include the question of personal health and personal aptitude.

A step in this direction has in recent years (1936) been taken by the Eugenics Society, not, it must be made clear, by the issue of certificates, but by the preparation of a schedule to be voluntarily filled, through the confidential medium of the family doctor, by each of the partners to a proposed marriage, for each other's private

information. These schedules (which may easily be obtained by doctors from the Society) have been prepared with great care by consultation with distinguished experts, and they cover not only all the chief relevant points of individual and family health, but also the subject often neglected, but at least equally important for marriage happiness, of each of the partners' knowledge and feeling on the psychic aspects of sex and marriage. Care has at the same time been taken to avoid making the questions too difficult for the average intelligence to grasp and answer correctly. The schedule has been extremely well received, in general, by medical, scientific, and lay opinion. There is certainly the impediment that few medical men of the present generation know anything of sexual psycho-pathology or of the principles of the still young science of genetics. But, as the leading scientific journal, *Nature*, remarked at the time in a congratulatory leading article, the schedule " will encourage the development of a eugenic conscience " and lead on towards the time when some such scheme must be backed by law, for " the State is bound, in its own interests, sooner or later to place its sentinels at the portals of birth."

To demand compulsory certificates of health at marriage is, indeed, to begin at the wrong end. It would not only lead to evasions and antagonisms but would probably call forth a reaction. It is first necessary to create the enthusiasm for health, the moral conscience in matters of procreation, together with, on the scientific side, a general habit of registering the anthropological, psychological, and pathological data concerning the individual, from birth onwards, altogether apart from marriage. The earlier demands of Diday and Bertillon were thus not only on a sounder but also a more practicable basis. If such records were kept from birth for every child, there would be no need for special examination at marriage, and many incidental ends would be gained. There is difficulty at present in obtaining such records from the moment of birth, and, so far as I am aware, no attempts have yet been made to establish their systematic registration. The Eugenics Society has here again come to our aid with a schedule, " How to Prepare a Family Pedigree," containing all the necessary preliminary material, with simple instructions, for the use of medical men, geneticists, and intelligent parents in general. If not at birth, it is quite possible to begin at the beginning of school life. and this is now done at many schools and colleges in England, America, and elsewhere, more especially as regards anthropological, physiological, and psychological data, each child being submitted to a thorough and searching anthropometric examination, and thus furnished with a systematic statement of his physical condition. This examination needs to be standardized and generalized, and repeated at fixed intervals. " Every individual child," as was stated by Dr. Dukes,

long the Physician to Rugby School, "on his entrance to a public school should be as carefully and as thoroughly examined as if it were for life insurance." This examination should, of course, be extended to all schools. If this procedure were general from an early age, there would be no hardship in the production of the record at marriage, and no opportunity for fraud. The *dossier* of each person might well be registered by the State, as wills already are, and, as in the case of wills, become freely open to students when a century had elapsed. Until this has been done during several centuries our knowledge of ourselves will remain rudimentary.

There can be little doubt that the eugenic attitude towards marriage, and the responsibility of the individual for the future of the race, is becoming more recognized. It is constantly happening that persons, about to marry, approach the physician in a state of serious anxiety on this point, and even when the marriage is not broken off after an unfavourable opinion, the resolve is often made to avoid procreation. Clouston, an eminent psychiatrist, wrote even thirty years ago: "I have been very much impressed of late years with the way in which this subject is taking possession of intelligent people, by the number of times one is consulted by young men and young women, proposing to marry, or by their fathers or mothers. I used to have the feeling in the back of my mind, when I was consulted, that it did not matter what I said, it would not make any difference. But it is making a difference." This is still more true to-day.

It is in America that pre-marital examination and advice has so far reached the greatest amount of systematization. The New York Committee on Maternal Health has long had in preparation a medical manual on pre-marital examination and instruction, and has issued a preliminary pamphlet on the subject, by Dr. R. L. Dickinson, full of wise counsel as regards both the physical and psychic aspects. Marriage counselling, whether by a clinic, or, as is frequently preferred by the applicant, individual counsellors, is becoming established, and an adequate series includes three features: (1) the interpretation of marriage experience to the individual need; (2) medical examination; (3) contraceptive advice. The same adviser, however, is not always competent in all these fields. It is found at a New York Marriage Consultation Centre, that while some applicants come with specific problems, most desire general instruction and advice in marital hygiene.[1]

Since Schallmayer, in 1891, advocated the medical examination of all candidates for matrimony, a proposal in that age regarded as Utopian, it has been carried out to a varying extent in various States,

[1] Full information on this subject may be found in the New York *Parent Education* of April–May, 1936, and the marriage counselling number of the New York *Birth Control Review* for December, 1936.

notably in the Scandinavian countries, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, while in Holland, where there is no law to enforce it, there is much influence, favoured by the Government, to further pre-marital examination, and many active centres. When in 1919 the Norwegian law came into force it was regarded as an " almost revolutionary step " towards the eugenic ideal, and if in any important point one of the partners had practised deceit the marriage could be dissolved. In Germany, in 1920, a law was passed making it obligatory to deliver to applicants for marriage licences a circular advising medical examination. In France and Belgium, as in England, public opinion is hostile to any official constraint in this matter. In America, on the other hand, legislation has sometimes run in advance of or even contrary to public opinion, and so hindered the cause it was intended to further. Thus when a " eugenic " law was enacted in Wisconsin in 1913 there was a sudden great decrease in the number of weddings, but very little of this was due to proposed unions being broken off for eugenic reasons ; what happened was that all couples who could afford it made little excursions outside the State to be married ; a certain number contracted " common-law marriages " which there was some reason to think were not invalidated by Statute Law, while others dispensed with law altogether and formed free unions.

Legislation in this field must go slowly, though that does not mean that it, or its equivalents, is not badly needed. Dr. Paul Popenoe found that of 500 consecutive cases coming before the Los Angeles Institute of Family Relations during 1930, all but one showed sexual maladjustment as a complicating factor, while in another State among 600 cases of alleged neglect and cruelty 97 per cent. indicated sex antagonism or maladjustment. In England a normal and highly intelligent young wife, not unacquainted with practical life and the world, writes to me after marriage : " From my own and other people's experience, I have concluded that engaged people are unconsciously deceptive, and that to gain her own ends Nature lures us into marriage by false pretences. Each prospective partner seems to offer the promise of the fulfilment of the other's mental and physical desires before marriage, but almost coincidentally with the end of the wedding ceremony there is a throwing off of pretence, a reversion to the real ego that is completely unconscious. The man thinks he has been misled—his wife is cold and unresponsive ; while she wonders what has happened to his interest in the thoughts and subjects they once had in common, and flees in terror from the avalanche of physical love. My bachelor days seem more and more attractive, and the thought that after all these years of acquaintance I should have married the wrong man, or made a mistake in marrying at all, is galling. I can help others, but remain helpless myself." There are innumerable women who could echo these words. No Family Relations Institutes,

or Marriage Counsel Centres, and still less any Parliamentary laws, can suffice to effect all the necessary adjustments. But we are still bound to work in that direction. We are doing so even by the encouragement of the eugenic attitude. Preventive social hygiene for minimizing the tragedies of maladjustment and misunderstanding in this field, it has been truly said, is comparable to preventive medicine. The recognition of the eugenic attitude towards marriage, the quickening of the social and individual conscience in matters of heredity, as also the systematic introduction of certification and registration, will be furthered by the growing tendency to the socialization of medicine, and, indeed, in its absence would be impossible. The growth of the State Medical Organization of Health is steady and continuous, and is constantly covering a larger field. The private practitioner of medicine is no longer to be viewed, as Duclaux put it, " like a grocer, whose shop the customer may enter and leave as he pleases, and when he pleases." It is now beginning to be felt that health is far too serious a matter, not only from the individual but also from the social point of view, to be left to private caprice. There is, indeed, a tendency, in some quarters, to fear that some day society may rush to the opposite extreme, and bow before medicine with the same unreasoning deference that it once bowed before theology. That danger is still very remote, nor is it likely, indeed, that medicine will ever claim any authority of this kind. The spirit of medicine has, notoriously, been rather towards the assertion of scepticism than of dogma, and the fanatics in this field will always be in a hopelessly small minority.

The general introduction of authentic personal records covering all essential data—hereditary, anthropometric, and pathological—cannot fail to be a force on the side of positive as well as of negative eugenics, for it would tend to promote the procreation of the fit as well as restrict that of the unfit, without any legislative compulsion. With the growth of education a regard for such records as a preliminary to marriage would become as much a matter of course as once was the regard to the restrictions imposed by Canon law, and as still is a regard to money or to caste. A woman can usually refrain from marrying a man with no money and no prospects ; a man may be passionately in love with a woman of lower social class than himself but he seldom marries her. It needs but a clear general perception of all that is involved in heredity and health to make eugenic considerations equally influential.

A discriminating regard to the quality of offspring will act beneficially on the side of positive eugenics by substituting the tendency to put a premium on excess of childbirth by the more rational method of putting a premium on the quality of the child. It has been one of the unfortunate results of the mania for protesting against that

decline of the birthrate, which is always and everywhere the result of civilization, that there has been a tendency to offer special social or pecuniary advantages to the parents of large families. Such premiums fail to be effective and we need not regret it. Since large families often tend to degenerate, and to become a tax on the community, since rapid pregnancies in succession are not only a serious drain on the strength of the mother but are now known to depreciate the quality of the offspring, and since, moreover, it is in large families that disease and mortality chiefly prevail, all the interests of the community are against the placing of any premium on large families, even in the case of parents of good stock. The interests of the State are bound up not with the quantity but with the quality of its citizens, and the premium should be placed not on the families that reach a certain size but on the individual children that reach a certain standard; the attainment of this standard could well be based on observations made from birth to the fifth year. A premium on this basis would be as beneficial to a State as that on the merely numerical basis is pernicious.

This consideration applies with still greater force to the proposals for the "systematic endowment of motherhood" of which we hear more and more. So moderate and judicious a social reformer as Sidney Webb long since wrote: "We shall have to face the problem of the systematic endowment of motherhood, and place this most indispensable of all professions upon an honourable economic basis. At present it is ignored as an occupation, unremunerated, and in no way honoured by the State." True as this statement is, it must always be remembered that an indispensable preliminary to any proposal for the endowment of motherhood by the State is a clear conception of the kind of motherhood which the State requires. To endow the reckless and indiscriminate motherhood which we see around us, to encourage, that is, by State aid, the production of citizens a large proportion of whom the State, if it dared, would like to destroy as unfit, is too ridiculous a proposal to deserve discussion.[1] The only sound reason, indeed, for the endowment of motherhood is that it would enable the State, in its own interests, to further the natural selection of the fit.

As to the positive qualities which the State is entitled to endow in its encouragement of motherhood, it is still too early to speak with complete assurance. Negative eugenics tends to be ahead of positive eugenics; it is easier to detect bad stocks than to be sure of good stocks. Both on the genetic side and on the social side we are only beginning to attain a clearer realization of the end to be attained and a more precise knowledge of the methods of attaining it.

[1] Wiethknudsen speaks strongly, but not too strongly, concerning the folly of any indiscriminate endowment of procreation.

Even when we have gained a fairly clear conception of the stocks and the individuals which we are justified in encouraging to undertake the task of producing fit citizens for the State, the problems of procreation are by no means at an end. Before we can so much as inquire what are the conditions under which selected individuals may best procreate, there is still the initial question to be decided whether those individuals are both fertile and potent, for this is not guaranteed by the fact that they belong to good stocks, nor is even the fact that a man and a woman are fertile with other persons any positive proof that they will be fertile with each other. Among the large masses of the population who do not seek to make their unions legal until those unions have proved fertile, this difficulty is settled in a simple and practical manner. The question is, however, a serious and hazardous one, in the present state of the marriage law in most countries, for those classes which are accustomed to bind themselves in legal marriage without any knowledge of their potency and fertility with each other. The matter is mostly left to chance, and as legal marriage cannot usually be dissolved on the ground that there are no offspring, even although procreation is commonly declared to be the chief end of marriage, the question assumes much gravity. The ordinary range of sterility is from 7 to 15 per cent. of all marriages, and in a very large proportion of these it is a source of great concern. This could be avoided, in some measure, by examination before marriage, and almost altogether by ordaining that, as it is only through offspring that a marriage has any concern for the State, a legal marriage could be dissolved, after a certain period, at the will of either of the parties, in the absence of such offspring.

It was formerly supposed that when a union proved infertile, it was the wife who was at fault. That belief is long since exploded, but, even yet, a man is generally far more concerned about his potency, that is, his ability to perform the mechanical act of coitus, than about his fertility, that is, his ability to produce living spermatozoa, though the latter condition is so common a source of sterility. In case of a sterile marriage, the possible cause should first be investigated in the husband, for it is comparatively easy to examine the semen for the presence of active spermatozoa. But, until recently, this precaution was often neglected, and many women have been operated on in the hope of removing a sterility which had no existence. The proportion of cases of sterility due to the male partner is usually given as about 25 per cent., but sometimes higher. The causes of sterility, including both sexes, are very numerous ; as many as sixty-seven have been enumerated, and several are frequently found in the same subject.[1]

[1] A comprehensive and pioneering attempt to bring order into this difficult subject has been made, for the American National Committee of Maternal Health, by Dr. S. R. Meaker, *Human Sterility : Causation, Diagnosis and Treatment* (New York and London, 1935).

When sterility is due to a defect in the husband's spermatozoa, or in his potency, the question of impregnating the wife by other methods has occasionally arisen. Divorce on the ground of sterility is not possible, and, even if it were, the couple, although they wish to have a child, have not usually any wish to separate. Under these circumstances, in order to secure the desired end, without departing from widely accepted rules of morality, the attempt is occasionally made to effect artificial insemination by injecting the semen of the husband or another male. It is nearly always very difficult to effect, and often impossible. Schwalbe, for instance, recorded a case in which—in consequence of the husband's sterility and the wife's anxiety, with her husband's consent, to be impregnated by the semen of another man—he made repeated careful attempts, which were fruitless, and the three parties concerned finally resigned themselves to the natural method of intercourse, which was successful. In another case recorded by Schwalbe, in which the husband was impotent but not sterile, six attempts were made to effect insemination, and further efforts abandoned on account of the disgust of all concerned.

Such failure is common, though Rohleder in Germany many years ago, reported 30 per cent. successes. Another more recent experimenter in England, as the result of thirty-three different cases, only succeeded in securing one doubtful miscarriage. There has often been a strange failure to realize that an important contributory, even though not absolutely essential, factor to success is some degree of psychic excitement on the part of the woman. This has been pointed out afresh by Kenneth Walker. Among horses and cattle artificial insemination appears to be as successful as natural union. But care is taken with a mare for a stallion to go through the form of serving her and the semen is injected immediately while she is still excited. With cows there are various methods of stimulating a preliminary excitement. In women this factor is completely disregarded and they may even be put under an anæsthetic beforehand.

The interest in artificial insemination has recently increased, especially in America. It has doubtless been stimulated by the further possibilities of completely ectogenetic generation, which are now being explored. J. B. S. Haldane has brought these possibilities before a wide public, and Aldous Huxley has made play with them in his *Brave New World*. At the Harvard Biological Institute, it has already been found possible to fertilize the ovum of a rabbit in a test tube, and even without the aid of the male element.

Such possibilities have encouraged speculative eugenic biologists to suggest the advantage of fertilizing women on a large scale by artificial insemination from some superior man. In the *Eugenics Review* in 1935 appeared a paper, which attracted wide attention, by Mr. Herbert Brewer, under the title of " Eutelegenesis," by which

he meant reproduction from the germ cells of individuals between whom is no bodily contact. He argued that, with the finest type of people and without compulsion, "we might accomplish in a few generations what otherwise would require millennia." We know that a single man in a single emission of semen produces (according to one estimate) some 200,000,000 spermatozoa. It should therefore be well within the bounds of possibility to utilize, say, 50,000 of these to impregnate a corresponding number of women. H. J. Muller considers this is a reasonable estimate with the technical methods now at our command. It might thus be possible to raise the average of the population half way towards the greatest living men in mind, body, or character, besides thus producing an unusually large number of persons of specially great ability. For the purpose Muller mentions the utilization of such men as Lenin, Newton, Leonardo, Pasteur, Beethoven, Puschkin, Marx. It may be pointed out, however, that these men and others of their supreme order have not always shown capacity to produce, even on the smallest scale, men of their own level, that their own characters, outside their genius, were not always of a socially desirable kind, and that some of them were possibly sterile. Moreover, the effectiveness of spermatozoa, even when motile, cannot always be guaranteed. So that there would always be the possibility that the whole of the 50,000 women might be left wailing, and only the army of bureaucrats needed for carrying out the operation be left with the satisfaction of pocketing their salaries. We need not, however, discourage these speculations, even though at present they refer to a rather remote future.

When we have ascertained that two individuals both belong to sound and healthy stocks, and, further, that they are themselves both apt for procreation, it still remains to consider the conditions under which they may best effect procreation.[1] There arises, for instance, the question, often asked : What is the best age for procreation ?

The considerations which weigh in answering this question are of two different orders, physiological, and social or moral. That is to say, that it is necessary, on the one hand, that physical maturity should have been fully attained, and the sexual cells completely developed ; while, on the other hand, it is necessary that the man shall have become able to support a family, and that both partners shall have received a training in life adequate to undertake the responsibilities and anxieties involved in the rearing of children. While there have been variations at different times, it scarcely appears that, on the whole, the general opinion as to the best age for procreation

[1] The study of the right conditions for procreation is ancient. In modern times we find that even the first French medical book in the vulgar tongue, the *Regime du Corps*, written by Alebrand of Florence (who was physician to the King of France), in 1256, is largely devoted to this matter, concerning which it gives much sound advice.

has greatly varied in Europe during many centuries. Hesiod, indeed, said that a woman should marry about fifteen and a man about thirty, but obstetricians for long past have usually concluded that, in the interests alike of the parents and their offspring, the procreative life should not begin in women before twenty and in men before twenty-five. After thirty in women and after thirty-five or forty in men it seems probable that the best conditions for procreation begin to decline.[1] The tendency has been for the age of marriage to fall at an increasingly late age, on the average some years later than that usually fixed as the most favourable age for the commencement of the procreative life. But, on the whole, the average seldom departs widely from the accepted standard, and there seems no good reason why we should desire to modify this general tendency.

At the same time, it by no means follows that wide variations, under special circumstances, may not only be permissible, but desirable. The male is capable of procreating, in some cases, from about the age of thirteen until far beyond eighty, and at this advanced age the offspring, even if not notable for great physical robustness, may possess high intellectual qualities. The range of the procreative age in women begins earlier (sometimes at eight), though it usually ceases by fifty, or earlier, in only rare cases continuing to sixty or beyond.

Of some importance is the question of early pregnancy. Several investigators have devoted their attention to this question. Thus Picard (in a Paris thesis, 1903) studied childbirth in thirty-eight mothers below the age of sixteen. He found that, although the pelvis is certainly not yet fully developed in very young girls, the joints and bones are much more yielding than in the adult, so that parturition, far from being more difficult, is usually rapid and easy. The process of labour itself is essentially normal in these cases, and even when abnormalities occur (low insertion of the placenta is a common anomaly) it is remarkable that the patients do not suffer from them

1 The statement that, on the average, the best age for procreation in men is before, rather than after, forty, by no means assumes the existence of a "critical" age in men analogous to the menopause in women, which is with increasing frequency asserted, though at a later age, and only for a certain proportion of men. It would appear that in most men the decline of sexual feeling and potency is gradual, and at first manifests itself in increased power of control. Halford is said to have referred to a "climacteric" tendency in men in 1831. But it was not until Kurt Mendel elaborately dealt with the "climacterium virile" (*Neurologisches Centralblatt*, October 16th, 1920) that the subject was placed on a definite basis. He regarded it as normal, and, though less definite than in the female, often with similar symptoms and diminished desire though no loss of potency, the age of occurrence being between forty-seven to fifty-seven. As regards the subject generally, see Riddoch, "Nervous and Mental Manifestations of the Climacteric," *British Medical Journal*, December 13th, 1930, the important work of Marañon, *The Climacteric*, 1929, and a useful little practical book by Dr. Marie Stopes, *Change of Life in Men and Women*, 1936.

in the way common among older women. The average weight of the child was three kilogrammes, or about 6 lb. 9 oz.; it sometimes required special care during the first few days after birth, perhaps because labour in these cases is sometimes slow. The recovery of the mother was, in every case, absolutely normal, and the fact that these young mothers become pregnant again more readily than primiparæ of a more mature age, further contributes to show that childbirth below the age of sixteen is in no way injurious to the mother. In London, Hubert Roberts, speaking of the wide experience of the Queen Charlotte's Hospital, points out that "as far as labour is concerned, in very young subjects they do very well indeed, possibly owing to the elasticity of the pelvic ligaments and bones, and they often bear children of fair size without instrumental aid."

It is clear that young mothers do remarkably well, while there is no doubt that they often bear unusually fine infants. It is not only physically that the children of young mothers are superior. Marro has found that the children of mothers under twenty-one are superior to those of older mothers both in conduct and intelligence, provided the fathers are not too old or too young. The detailed records of individual cases confirm these results, both as regards mother and child. Thus, Milner recorded a case of pregnancy in a girl of fourteen; the labour pains were very mild, and delivery was easy. E. B. Wales, of New Jersey, has recorded the history of a coloured girl who became pregnant at the age of eleven. She was of medium size, rather tall and slender, but well developed, and began to menstruate at the age of ten. She was in good health and spirits during pregnancy, and able to work. Delivery was easy and natural, not notably prolonged, and apparently not unduly painful, for there were no moans or agitation. The child was a fine, healthy boy, weighing not less than 11 lb. Mother and child both did well, and there was a great flow of milk. Herbert Spencer states that the youngest case he has personally attended was a healthy English girl of eleven who was delivered naturally of a living child at term. In Belgium Geets records the case of a girl of thirteen years and three months who was delivered normally of a splendid boy, born living, though it died shortly afterwards; gestation, labour, and delivery were all fairly easy and without physical or mental disturbance.

Whiteside Robertson has recorded a case of pregnancy at the age of thirteen, in a girl of British origin, in South Africa, which is notable from other points of view. During pregnancy she was anæmic, and appeared to be of poor development and doubtfully normal pelvic conformation. Yet delivery took place naturally, at full term, without difficulty or injury, and the lying-in period was in every way satisfactory. The baby was well-proportioned, and weighed 7½ lb. "I have rarely seen a primipara enjoy easier labour," concluded Robertson,

" and I have never seen one look forward to the happy realization of motherhood with greater satisfaction."[1]

The facts brought forward by obstetricians concerning the good results of early pregnancy, as regards both mother and child, have not yet received the attention they deserve. They are, however, confirmed by many general tendencies which are now fairly well recognized. The significant fact is known, for instance, that in mothers over thirty, the proportion of abortions and miscarriages is twice as great as in mothers between the ages of fifteen and twenty, who also are superior in this respect to mothers between the ages of twenty to thirty. Mothers over thirty, and especially over forty, are more likely to have children afflicted with congenital malformation. It was, again, proved by Matthews Duncan, in his Goulstonian lectures, that the chances of sterility in a woman increase with increase of age. It has, further, been shown that the older a woman at marriage, the greater the average interval before the first delivery, a tendency which seems to indicate that it is the very young woman who is in the condition most apt for procreation ; Kisch was not, indeed, inclined to think that this applies to women below twenty, but the fact, observed by other obstetricians, that mothers under eighteen tend to become pregnant again at an unusually short interval, goes far to neutralize the exception made by Kisch. It may also be pointed out that, among children of very young mothers, the sexes are more nearly equal in number than is the case with older mothers, who also are twice as likely to begin with twins. This would seem to indicate that we are here in presence of a normal equilibrium which will decrease as the age of the mother is progressively disturbed in an abnormal direction

The facility of parturition at an early age, it may be noted, corresponds to an equal facility in physical sexual intercourse. In Russia, where marriage takes place early, it was formerly common when the woman was only twelve or thirteen, and Guttceit says that he was assured by women who married at this age that the first coitus presented no especial difficulties.

In former centuries European girls (as well as men) married at a much younger age than at present, for age at marriage of both sexes has slowly increased during the last hundred years. In Germany during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries girls were commonly married between the ages of thirteen and fifteen to husbands two or three years older ; this was approved after the Reformation by Luther

[1] The youngest reliable case of pregnancy, so far as I am aware, was carefully and fully recorded and illustrated in the *Zentralblatt für Gynäkologie*, September 23rd, 1933. It was that of a girl just over six years of age who gave birth to a child, weighing 3 kilos, which had to be delivered by craniotomy. The mother had been precociously developed at four.

and other Protestant theologians. In accordance with this marriage custom, Brandes has pointed out that while modern women often have their love affairs in their thirties, in classic literature—Shakespeare, Racine, Ariosto, Scott, etc.—the heroine is usually round about the age of sixteen. In real life, I may add, Margaret of Navarre, one of the most brilliant and charming women in history, was born when her mother was sixteen (her father was thirty-six), and Madame de Charrière, one of the most clever and distinguished women of the eighteenth century, a century rich in such women, was born of a mother scarcely seventeen whom she closely resembled and by whom she was admirably educated.

There is undoubtedly, at the present time, a considerable amount of prejudice against early motherhood. In part, this is due to a failure to realize that women are sexually much more precocious than men, physically as well as psychically. The difference is about five years. This difference has been virtually recognized for thousands of years, in the ancient belief that the age of election for procreation is about twenty, or less, for women, but about twenty-five for men ; and it has more lately been affirmed by the discovery that, while the male is not capable of generation before thirteen, the female may, in occasional instances, become pregnant at eight. In part, also, there is an objection to the assumption of responsibilities so serious as those of motherhood by a young girl, and there is the reasonable feeling that the obligations of a permanent marriage tie ought not to be undertaken at an early age. On the other hand, apart from the physical advantages, as regards both mother and infant, on the side of early pregnancies, it is an advantage for the child to have a young mother, who can devote herself sympathetically and unreservedly to its interests, instead of presenting the pathetic spectacle we so often witness in the middle-aged woman who turns to motherhood when her youth and mental flexibility are gone, and her habits and tastes have settled into other grooves ; it has sometimes been a great blessing even to the very greatest men, like Goethe, to have had a youthful mother. It would also, in many cases, be an advantage for the woman herself if she could bring her procreative life to an end well before the age of twenty-five, so that she could then, unhampered by child-bearing and mature in experience, be free to enter on such wider activities in the world as she might be fitted for.

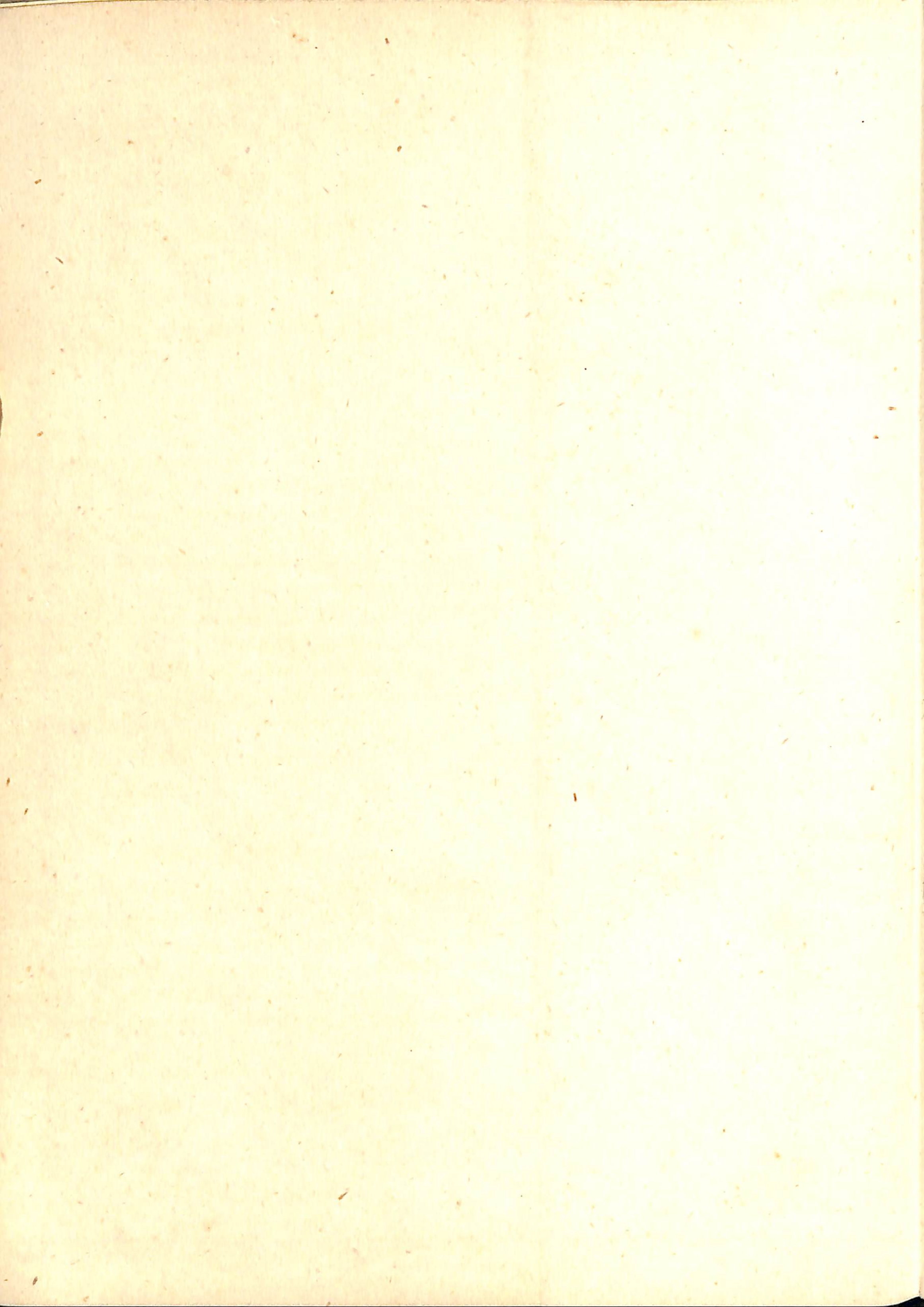
Such an arrangement of the procreative life of women would, obviously, only be a variation, and would probably be unsuited for the majority. Every case must be judged on its own merits. The best age for procreation will probably continue to be regarded as being, for most women, around the age of twenty. But at a time like the present, when there is an unfortunate tendency for motherhood to be unduly delayed, it becomes necessary to insist on the advantages, in many

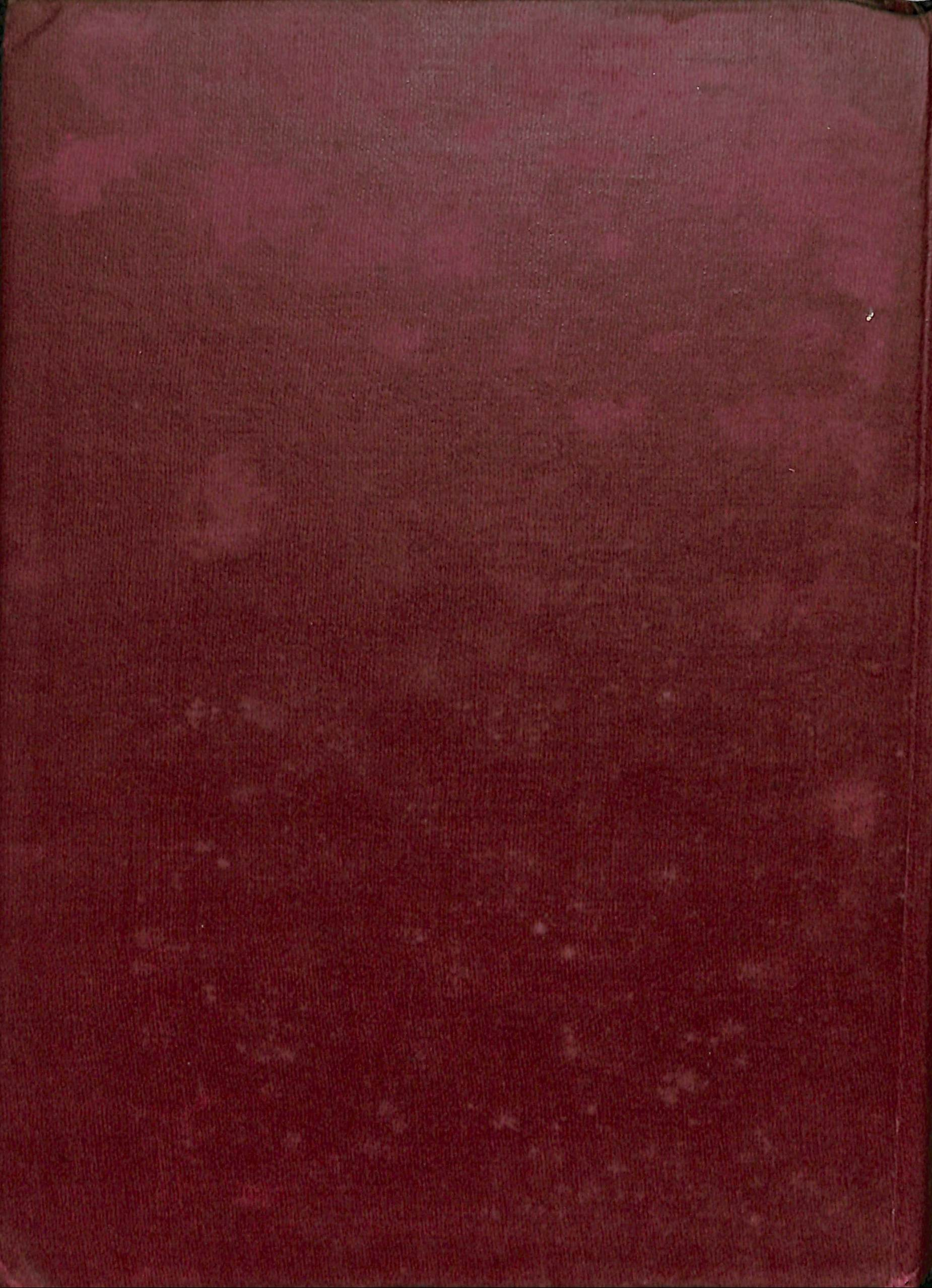
cases, of early motherhood, though we need not, as is sometimes done, unduly stress the difficulties and dangers awaiting elderly primiparæ.

There are other conditions favourable, or unfavourable, to procreation which it is here unnecessary to discuss. There is, for instance, the question of the time of year, and the period of the menstrual cycle, which may most properly be selected. The best period is probably that when sexual desire is strongest. This is frequently in spring or early summer when the largest number of conceptions occur. Among the lower animals spring litters are sometimes said to be the best. It may be noted also that, according to the investigations of Maignon, in various animals, apart from changes in temperature, nutritional activity reaches its metabolic maximum in spring and autumn. The best period of the menstrual month for procreation is a debated question as the period of ovulation is still not ascertainable with accuracy in women. The female rhesus monkey, however, with a sexual cycle in essentials parallel to that of women, has been carefully studied by Josephine Ball and Carl Hartman of the Carnegie Institution. They found that menstruation usually occurred twelve days before ovulation, and that sex desire rose after menstruation to a peak at or shortly before ovulation, thence descending to menstruation. It seems quite probable that this generally accords with the phenomena in women. Most authorities agree that the period of greatest sexual desire in women is most usually shortly after menstruation (though a few also place it before the period). Most of the old traditions (as of the Talmud) and the ancient authorities (like Soranus) recommend this time for coitus, and Bossi has stated that it gives the greatest number of successes in both natural and artificial insemination. The problem of the vitality of the spermatozoa has, of course, to be considered in this connection. In the vagina it is commonly said that they disappear or are destroyed within four hours, but that is not so after they enter the womb, and Nürnberger was in two cases able to demonstrate the presence of living spermatozoa in normal Fallopian tubes fourteen and fifteen days respectively after the last possible date of sexual intercourse. So that the post-menstrual period would be entirely favourable for conception. Susruta, the Indian physician, said that at this time pregnancy most readily occurs because then the mouth of the womb is open, like the flower of the water-lily to the sunshine.

We have now at last reached the point from which we started, the moment of conception, and the child again lies in its mother's womb. There remains no more to be said. The cycle of life is complete.

# INDEX OF SUBJECTS





*Reviews of* SEX IN RELATION TO SOCIETY



TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT: "Dr. Ellis, as usual, writes very clearly and with none of the aridity sometimes shown in scientific works; as usual, too, his scholarly mind and large store of fact and instance make his book rich and illuminating."

EUGENICS REVIEW: "The volume is packed from cover to cover with interesting, important and informative matter, presented in orderly and logical sequence and in a style at once dignified, scholarly and engaging, so that, while the matter holds the attention, the manner carries the reader smoothly along the pleasant pages. It is a book which cannot be too highly recommended to those who would understand the place of sex in the complex of social activities."

NATURE: "Each of his chapters is full of interesting and instructive facts, presented with none of the aridity so often found in scientific works, and accompanied with illuminating and well-balanced judgments, most of which every unprejudiced reader is bound to accept."

THE LANCET: "The modern cry for candour has released a spate of books on sex and there might have been fewer bad or indifferent ones published had Dr. Ellis's served more often as a model. Sincerity and sympathy, coupled with encyclopædic knowledge, are among the cardinal virtues of this book. . . . It is to be hoped that it secures the wide public that it richly deserves."

BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL: "No thinking person ought to burke the problems of sex in society; and he will find the information which he requires, if he is to consider them honestly, set out in this book as completely, as scientifically, and as impartially as he could wish."

ABRAHAM STONE, M.D.: "The volume is almost an encyclopædia in itself: nearly every phase of sex in its social implications is comprehensively considered . . . all these problems are treated in the scholarly and critical fashion and with that spirit of sincerity and serenity, liberality and tolerance which are the characteristic qualities of all of Ellis's writings. Whatever he discusses he presents with the admirable clarity of the scientist and the embracing wisdom of the philosopher."

